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"NOW, IS THE ACCEPTED TIME."

BY MRS. J. B. SOUCHESTY.

"Now," is the voice that Nature breathes
To those her love who heed,—
The changeful cloud, the flowing breeze,
The living rose, the unwing'd seeds,
Destiny her warning cried.

"Now," is the word that Wisdom writes
On pillars, hall and bower;
The fairest part from hour to hour,
The future—what is that to thee?
Improve the present hour.

"Now," saith the Spirit from on high,—
"Now," saith a Pow'r within,—
To-morrow hath its band of cares,
To-morrow's hand its promise bears
Of the accepted time.

"Now," though another morn may rise
In purple and in gold,
Thine eye shall dim by falling breath,
And shrouded in the dust of death,
May not be light beheld.

"Now,"—not to-morrow,—Oh, my soul,
Obey thy Maker's call,
Lest darkly on the record of the
Blest forth the fearful doom,—No Isle—
And thou be rich of all.

Waltham, May 1st, 1858.

BLANCHE BERTRAND;
OR,
PERILS OF THE BORDER.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEATH-BLOW.

Had a thunderbolt fallen from a cloudless sky, Eugene could not have been more astonished than at again finding himself, in spite of all his previous thrust, so suddenly in the power of his natural foes. Where could they have come from? He glanced quickly around him, as he somewhat mechanically gave his hand to the Indian who addressed him, and the mystery was at once explained.

In the direction toward which he had turned his face, there was a wooded ravine, or narrow valley, which was a large spreading tree, from whose branches depended a long, thick, clustering vine; and the Indians being, as they must have been, in the vicinity at the moment of the report of his rifle, had thus been able to discover his position without being seen themselves; and by tracing him with their eyes to the rock where the fire had been kindled, they had easily succeeded in getting the tree, vine, and bush in a direct line with their approach to him; and so, even through looking confirmed and guardedly about him, they had, in their silent and stealthy manner, been enabled to advance, single file, unperceived, to within a distance of less than a hundred feet—from whence, while his attention had been occupied with his food, it had been an easy matter for them to come upon him unawares.

We say Eugene gave his hand somewhat mechanically to the spokesman of the party; *yet*, while in the act of doing so, he had not only, as already mentioned, seized the weapon of their approach, but, with the same quick, eager glance, had perceived that the rifle he also had already been withdrawn, and was in the possession of another, and that therefore there was no chance of resistance on his part, setting aside even the hope of escape.

Fortune seemed truly the befriender and himself the shuttle cock; the more unexpected turn in his fate which had more than once given hope to his despair, had again brought despair to his hope; and he now mentally groaned at the thought that he was again in the power of beings from whom he could expect no mercy, and from whom there now seemed to him no the faintest possibility of escape.

As for the negro, his condition somewhat despite characteristic of himself. While deeply engaged in ravenously devouring his portion of the food—another proverbially, of the danger—the voice of the savage who addressed Eugene fell upon his ear. Looking quickly around, and discovering the grim faces of his most dreaded foes, his eyes suddenly enlarged to their greatest dimensions; and dropping the half-devoured turkey on one side of him, and uttering a yell that quite astonished the Indians, he threw himself backward, rolled completely off the rock, and felt at the feet of an unsympathizing Indian. Here, shaking his eyes, with some awful contortions of countenance, and several spasmodic contractions of his nerves, he opened his well-filled mouth, and began bellowing, "help! murder! help!" till that aperture of his face was still further enamed by having the muzzle of a gun somewhat rudely thrust into it. This stopped his clamor, and enabled him to recover from his first terrible fright; whereupon, perceiving from the conduct of the savage that neither he nor Eugene, who was in the act of shaking hands with each of the party, was in danger of being immediately killed, he quickly gathered himself upon his feet, and, with an expression quite ludicrous, began to shake hands vigorously with his captors also; and to every observation of theirs of, "How do do, brudder?" he replied, eagerly:

"I 'spects well, massr, I is, and hopes you is yoself. It's a little bit skeered just now, at seeing so many on 'spected gentlem'; but don't 'spect, dat isn't; it's all over dat now, since I knows who you is."

Whether the Indians understood him or not, they seemed to be a good deal amused; and more than one patted his woolly cranium, and cried out:

"Brudder much wool got—brudder much black —no paint brudder for burn."

THE CAPTIVE.

This last was an allusion to a general custom among the Indians, on a certain day, of painting a black such prisoners as the Grand Council had decreed to the awful doom of being burned alive at the stake—an allusion which Dutz so far comprehended as to consider not the most pleasant in the world—though he was ignorant of its full import—he showed his white teeth, and seem more happy than before.

Another consultation of signs which, of course, Eugene took no interest; he had made his choice in the night. Eugene soon had reason to know; for scarcely had the Indians concluded their friendly announcement of claiming fraternal relationship, than the one to whom the gun in question had been immediately passed, and who was without other weapon of the same kind, walked quickly up to him, and, looking him fiercely in the eye, as the most time grasping the barrel with one hand and striking it with the other, said:

"Long Knife steal Injun gun—run—get away —good! Injun great warrior—brave—coming find trail—run faster—catch Long Knife—get gun —all good! Long Knife come with Injun—no more steal gun."

Saying this he struck his breast some two or three times, with an air of dignity, and turned haughtily away.

The whole party, as Eugene now sunned them in the clear light of day, appeared scarcely more prepossessing than by the light of their camp-fire. From the fact of their being well armed and most splendidly painted; their dusky limbs, bodies, and faces hideously streaked with different colors; their scaly looks elaborately plaited, and ornamented with tufts of feathers; the absence of all superfluous clothing—the breech cloths only being worn around their loins; here and there one with a rather fresh-looking scalp dangling at his girdle from all this, we say, Eugene very naturally came to the conclusion that those were warriors who had equipped themselves for a warlike expedition; and who probably had been successful to a certain degree—perhaps in surprising some unguarded settlers, and murdering him and his family—but without other success, or at least bringing with them, any weighty plunder. Taking into consideration also the different parties, besides this, which he knew to be abroad in different directions—logic which instantly pointed, and unerringly with fatality

made upon his enemies by a party speaking the same language as himself. Then, turning the trunk of a gigantic oak, he stopped and listened to the yells, shrieks, groans, and trampling, clashing sounds of strife, his heart wildly beating with hope, but almost afraid to credit his senses, lest he should suddenly awake, as from a dream, and find it all a delusion.

It was no dream, however, but a stern and bloody reality; for the Indians had suddenly been assailed by a small party of whites, of about their own number; and being completely taken by surprise, with their pieces just discharged—and one being killed and three wounded by the first volley of their enemies—there was not even a possibility of their making a successful resistance. In fact they did not attempt it; but those who could, turned quickly from their foes, to conceal themselves in the darkness of the surrounding wood; yet so fierce was the onset, and so close their enemies, that only two succeeded in making their escape—the others being all slain, and even scalped, in less than five minutes from the opening fire.

The affray—if affray it could be called, when the action was confined almost entirely to one side—ended in a complete triumph of the assailants; who had thus taken signal vengeance upon some six or eight of their hated enemies, without the loss of a single man, and with only one or two very slightly wounded.

The noise of the conflict had been more like that of so many wild beasts, or what we generally conceive of demons, than of anything human; and as soon as it was over—and the different parties, blood-stained, and with the reeking scalps of their slaughtered foes in their possession, had collected around the fire of the camp—they sent up a shout in honor of their victory and "Old Kaintuck," which resounded afar through the great forest, and added speed to the flight of those who had in turn become flying fugitives.

"That's the way to gin it to the red niggers!" said one, boastfully; "and now whar's him as strack the fust blow?"

"Here!" called out Eugene, as he hastily quitted his position behind the tree, which he had quietly kept till this moment.

As he advanced to the fire, he beheld eight individuals, in the rough costume of the border, standing near together, most of them leaning upon their rifles, and all eyes fixed in the direction of his approach; and the moment he had fairly come into view, one of the group bounded quickly forward, exclaiming:

"By the etarnal thunders! ef it arn't the Cap'n himself, may this here rifle o' mine never blow another devil to the place whar he come from fust!"

"Why, Seth Harper," fairly shouted Eugene, as he grasped the rough hand of the boatman, "is this really you, alive, after all?"

"Right side up, Cap'n, like a running b'ar, and with as many lives as ary cat! Scalp all tight—bones all hull—and nary scratch!"

"God bless you, Seth!" returned the young Virginian, in a voice tremulous with emotion: "I was never so glad to see you in my life!"

"In course you warn't, Cap'n—for you war gitting in a rayther tight fix about the time we blazed away, and showed them thar brutes that old Wirginy and Kaintuck war about. Jest look now at the greasy niggers stretched out around us here, and tell me they arn't beauties!"

"I would much rather see them as they are, than as I saw them a few minutes ago," rejoined our hero.

"That's a p'inted fact, Cap'n, as any one can swar to what seed you breaking for tall timber. But tell me—ar' this the party that tuk you fust? and ef so, what's the Cunnel's darter?"

"I have had some rather remarkable adventures since I saw you, Seth," replied Eugene; who forthwith proceeded to give the boatman an account, in as few words as possible, of what had occurred since his capture.

"And so Miss Blanche's a goner, hey?" returned Seth, very soberly. "Tell you what, Cap'n, that thar grates agin my feelings amazing. I'd a gin my right hand for that thar gal's safety; yes, for that matter, this here old ugly carcass, too; and I war in hopes the Injuns 'ud divide off, and that we'd trip up the hounds as had her and you in tow, afore they'd git to thar infernal towns."

"But she can be rescued yet, Seth, can she not?" inquired Eugene, anxiously. "Nay, there is no question about it—she *must* be! she *must* be!"

"Wall, Cap'n, we'll see what can be done; though, ef they've got her on to thar own stamping-ground, whar they're stuck in as thick as muskeeters over a swamp pond, it's got a awful dubious look, it has. But you war saying so'thing about the black nigger, and how he gnawed you loose. That thar war a good trick for the blundering fool—more'n I'd ever 'spected of him. Whar is he now? I seed so'thing black when I fust come up, but didn't exactly know whether it war a nigger or a burnt stump; and it's little I thought as it war Snowball; and it's little I thought, too, that the feller as run war you; for, you see, we'd got up in sight jest as you war striking that thar Injun; and it not being werry light, and you half naked, we couldn't only tell it war a white man afore we pitched in. But whar's Snowball, I say? Hope he warn't killed! I've got a kind of a feller-feeling for that nigger, ef he ar' black; and I'd like to see as many of the old party together agin, as ever can be fotched—for the Lord he knows thar war enough o' us killed."

"I, too, hope that no harm has befallen him!" said Eugene, sufficiently withdrawing his mind from a painful contemplation of the fate of Blanche to make a reply to the boatman.

Seth Harper immediately set up a loud call for Duke; and after several times repeating the name by which he generally addressed him, a rather faint, quavering answer came back, in the voice of the frightened black himself.

"Who-who-who's dat dar?"

"Come out here, you woolly-headed lump of blackness, and don't play possum any more!" cried Seth. Then turning to Eugene, he added: "The nigger's all right and tight, and he'll find his way along when he gits ready; and so come, I want to make you acquainted with the boys here, that you'll find as true a set of humans as ever dipped a oar, trod a trail, or shot a painted Injun."

Saying this, he led Eugene up to the group, and first presented him to a tall, handsomely-formed man, some five-and-thirty years of age, and over six feet in hight, with light complexion, light hair, strongly marked features, and small, fascinating grey eyes—the boatman, in his characteristic manner, observing, as he did so:

"This here, Cap'n Fairfax, I reckon ar' a man you've heerd about; for he's tramped a heap over these diggings—been in all manner of scrimmages—been hung, drownded, and roasted, and biled considerable by the infernal varmints—and can knock down, drag out, and steal more hosses nor any other two-legged thing a running."

"I am quite happy to make his acquaintance!" said Eugene, with a laugh, as he extended his hand to the borderer, and experienced a gripe which gave him pain—the latter at the same time observing:

"The same to you, stranger, and proud to know you. You've had a heap o' dodging round amongst the brutes, I hear, but I hope I see you cl'ar now."

"How did I understand you to call this gentleman?" inquired Eugene, turning to Seth.

"Why, we call him the biggest hoss on the road, or the best nigger o' the pile," laughed Seth. "But he's got two or three other names. When he war dodging the law, on account o' that thar scrape in old Wirginy, he used to call himself Simon Butler; but now, as that's over, he's come out what he allers war, old Simon Kenton."

"Ah! Simon Kenton!" returned Eugene, again shaking the hand of the redoubtable hero: "I'm happy, sir, to say, that your fame has gone much further than yourself! and that your name has long been familiar to me, as one of the bravest of our frontier defenders!"

"I don't know much about fame, strannger," rejoined Kenton, with a light laugh; "but I don't think it's fur out o' the way to say, that I've pitched into a few of the Injuns in my time, and tuk a few o' thar scalps, and stole a few o' thar hosses, for which they don't love me no harder nor a big ba'r can hug. But, strannger, thar's other boys here that needn't be ashamed o' thar doings—and, young or old, they've all been in whar thar war 'blood drawed.'"

With this Kenton turned and laid his hand upon the shoulder of a fine-looking youth, almost as tall as himself, with blue eyes, fair complexion, light hair, and what would have been handsome features, but for the prominence of a large Roman nose.

"Here now, for instance," he continued, "you see a mere stripling, who's done some tall fighting for a boy. They say he jumped out o' his cradle and shot a Injun the first week arter he war born, and licked his weight in wild-cats the next. Howsomever that mought be, he's some in Kaintuck, and ar' called Neil Washburn. Next," pursued Kenton, pointing to another, "we've got this here long-legged critter as is called Lew. Wetzel, who can run about as fast as any of the red-skins, load a rifle while running, and shoot at the same time. Then thar's Whiteman, Bowles, Kinney, and Watson, all of the fust order in a scrimmage, and them's all. And now," continued Kenton, in his off-hand way, "as you knows the hull of us beauties, I reckon you'd best gather up your clothes—that is, ef you'll put anything on as an Injun has had on last—and be ready for so'thing else. Go in, boys," he added to the group in general, "and let's git whatever else these niggers has as we want."

Upon this the whole party proceeded to overhaul the bodies of the slain—collecting their rifles, tomahawks, knives, ammunition, and so forth, and restoring Eugene the most of his garments, all of which were more or less stained with the blood of those who had put them on in triumph.

While the party was thus occupied, Duke came timidly stealing from his retreat; and perceiving that Eugene was safe—and also recognizing Seth Harper, who happened to be standing near him, and both fairly within the light of the fire—he advanced more quickly and boldly, at the same time exclaiming:

"Why, Marse Seth, is dat dar you for trufh? I's dreful glad to see you, I is. I's thought I knowed your voice when you hollered, I did—though I's 'spoed you was dead and gone, long time, and dat dat dar was your ghost or suffin."

"Not yit, Snowball, ef it's all the same to you," returned the boatman, with a laugh. "But I say, boy, how've you managed to keep your wool on, when thar's so many of your brother niggers hev lost their hair? How'd you git out of the creek when we left you yelping, whar your infernal noise fotched all the Injuns on to us?"

"Well, Marse Seth, dat dar was done easy 'nuff. I's just swam like a fish to the shore, and a big Injun come and gin me his hand, and says he, 'How de do, brudder?' I's tole him I was a little bit wet, dat's all, and just a little bit skeered when I t'ought I was drowndering. Den up comes dat odder white Injun, and axed who you was, and whar you're gwine. I tole him I guessed you was white folks dat was trying to run away. Den he said I was a fool, and had me tied up so as I couldn't run. Dar I stayed tied till Marse Eugene and Miss Blanche was fotched back—and Marse Eugene can tell you all de rest, he can."

"But whar war you jest now, when I hollered for you?"

"Well, you see, Marse Seth, dat dar's a cl'ar case, dat is. I's just seed you white gentl'em' come up and 'gin to shoot; and den I knowed de Injuns was such cowards dat dey'd begin to run; so I just stepped down into de woods dar to head 'em off."

"And did you do it?" inquired Seth, with mock seriousness.

"'Spect I's done suffin dat way," returned Duke, with an air of satisfaction. "'Least I's knows dis much—dat dar wasn't no Injuns some past whar dis pusson was."

"And ef thar had, I 'spose you'd a cotched em?" said Seth.

"Yes, Marse Seth, dat's a cl'ar case, dat is—dat's just what I was agwine to done. You see I was agwine to cotch 'em up, and frow 'em down, and broke dar necks, I was."

"You'll do!" said Seth, with a grin; "only, ef you war me, and I war you, I wouldn't put nary grease on that thar wool."

"Why?" asked Duke.

"Kase you're too good to be running round loose; and ef you had your head greased, so'thing mought swaller you."

"Dat's what you tole dis pusson as de Injuns was agwine to do long time ago—but you see as dey didn't."

"That's kase they'd better feed at fust," laughed Seth; "and arter they'd come to know you, they smelt pizen. Thar, Snowball, you'll do—so jest hunt up your traps, and git ready for a tramp."

"By-the-by, Seth," said Eugene, "you have not yet told me how you made your own escape. When you went over the side of the boat, at the fire of the Indians, I believed you were shot."

"Nary scratch," replied the boatman, "but one or two powerful close dodges. I knowed as thar warn't no use in my holding on thar—and we'd both promised Miss Blanche, ef it come to a close thing, we'd try and git away—so I made a big dive, and kept under the water, and swum to the bank, and left the cussed hounds to nose around for me till they got tired. Then I sot off through the woods, and tramped all night; and the next morning I found myself lost, and didn't know which way to steer to git anywhar. Wall, I kept on, and tramped all that day, without anything to eat; but jest at night I fell in with this here party, who war out on a sort of scouting and hoss-stealing ventur'. I told 'em what had hap'd to me, and you, and the rest on us, and larned from them that some of the imps had jest been at thar bloody work over in Kaintuck, and that they'd sot out hot-foot for revenge. So arter talking it over, we agreed to strike up through the country here, towards the Piqua towns, thinking it warn't unlike they'd send you on towards thar village by a small party, and that it mought jest so hap as we'd strike their trail and come in somewhar in time to gin you a lift and send the niggers to thar master below. A few miles back here we struck a broad, fresh trail, and pushed on hard, and come up jest in time to save you."

"For which, Heaven knows, I feel most grateful!" returned Eugene. "How I came to kill that savage, I scarcely know—I believe I was for the moment insane. But tell me—are not the Indians abroad in greater numbers than usual?"

"So it 'pears to me, young man," said Kenton, who came walking up just as the question had been put; "we've heered on 'em in all quarters about these diggings; but they don't seem to be much together 'cept on the Ohio, whar they've attacked nearly every boat as has come down within the last three weeks, and made several captur's. Thar's a good deal of tramping about in small parties, I find; but it seems a little curious, that all I've got track on, or heered on, is afoot. D'ye see any hosses along with the big party as tuk you, Cap'n?"

"No," replied Eugene, "I did not see a single horse. The goods taken from the boat were carried back by the parties themselves—we prisoners doing our share of the labor—and most of them hid in a thicket about fifteen miles from the boat."

"Nary hoss, hey?" said Kenton; "then the brutes must hev left 'em up to their stamping-grounds; and ef we could only git up thar, and find 'em away, we mought make a good haul."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Eugene, starting at the idea; "who knows but what we might do better than that—save Miss Bertrand herself!"

"Oh, yes, the gal!" said Kenton; "I'd a forgot her—though Seth here told me all about it."

"Talk about hosses and hoss-stealing," put in Wetzel, with a laugh, as with some two or three others he now rejoined the party, "and Major Kenton here 'ud forgit himself, as he did a few years ago, at the time he got tuk, and come nigher being roasted than he ever will of getting to Heaven."

"Wall, it's a fact," rejoined Kenton, "that rale good hoss-flesh ar' my leaning; and I never sees a right fine critter, b'longing to white man or nigger, that I don't feel a tremendyus itching to put my carcass onto his, and take a free ride. But I say, young stranger, how about them thar goods? don't you think we can steal 'em back?"

"For myself," answered Eugene, seriously, "I feel like giving no consideration to anything while Miss Bertrand remains in captivity. Human life, and especially such a life as hers, is far more important in my view than either horses or goods!"

"Wall, I 'spect you're right thar, my friend," answered the rough borderer; "and ef anything can be done for the gal, I reckon we oughter gin attention to her fust."

"Do that," rejoined Eugene, "restore her to liberty by any means, and I promise you, you shall not go unrewarded!"

"Bah!" exclaimed Kenton; "who's so mean as to think about pay?"

"What about the paint of them as captur'd her?" inquired the youth already introduced as Neil Washburn; "war they like these here dogs round here?"

"Much the same," answered the young Virginian.

"Then it's like they're Shawnees, and maybe from the old Chillicothe towns on the Miami; and ef so, it's a ventur' as a mighty powerful few 'ud like to make."

After discussing the matter some quarter of an hour, it was finally decided that the parties should set out at daylight on the following morning, and, if possible, take the backward trail of Eugene and the negro to the camp-ground from which they had first escaped, [illegible] to be governed in some degree by the discoveries they might make, and the circumstances which might arise. There seemed to be one great drawback to their hopes, however. Two of the assailed party of Indians had escaped; and it was believed these would make their way directly homeward, report their loss to their friends, and, by thus warning them of the proximity of their foes, not only prevent a surprise, or a midnight reconnoitre, but perhaps incite a large body of warriors to set out in quest of the daring invaders. Still, our gallant little band was composed of men who seldom took danger into consideration, or shrunk from attempting any possible adventure, however perilous; and so, notwithstanding they looked upon their present desire, of rescuing a female captive from the hands of one of the most powerful tribes of that day, as the risk of one thrusting his head into the lion's mouth, they yet determined to proceed with their design, recklessly trusting to some opportune fortune or event to carry their purpose safely through.

This being unequivocally settled, they now set off down the bank of the little stream, which they followed for about a mile, and then encamped for the night, in the center of a dense thicket, but without starting a fire, not thinking it prudent, considering the number of the Indians abroad, to render their present location at all conspicuous.

The night passed off without disturbance, and early the next morning they set about the execution of their new-formed design. All trace of Eugene's trail was not yet obliterated; and, aided by his recollection, the whole party was enabled to advance rapidly back to the hill from which he had discovered the camp-fire of the party which had subsequently captured him and been so signally destroyed. From here his trail was not so clear; but owing to the fact that it had been passed over the day previously by the two Indians sent in quest of him, our little band of experienced woodsmen were successful in keeping it, and in reaching the point they sought while the sun was yet an hour or two above the horizon.

Deep and powerful were the emotions excited in the breast of our young hero, as he once more stood upon the ground, and looked upon the very spot, where he had last beheld the being of his heart's adoration. Where was she now? and what physical and mental sufferings had been hers since that eventful time? He shuddered as he thought, and silently vowed, that, come what might, he would go forward to her rescue or his doom.

"The trail's cl'ar, young man, and goes on'ard, as near as we can make it out, towards old Chillicothe," said Kenton, tapping the rather abstracted young Virginian on the shoulder.

"And I will follow it," returned Eugene, quickly, "though it lead me to my grave."

"It's like to lead to so'thing wuss nor the grave fust, ef you foller it with your head up, and with high notions of contempt for the greasy brutes in your path!" rejoined the cautious and practical woodsman. "It's purty cl'ar to be seed, my friend," he continued, "that you're dead in love with the gal we're arter; and I know, from old experience, that that thar arn't the best thing in the world to make a feller cl'ar-headed; and ef a man ever wants a cl'ar head, it's when he's dodging amongst the red-skins, as it's like we'll all be afore long."

"I think," replied Eugene, "you will find me as clear-headed, and as cautious, as if there were not at stake what I value far more than my own existence; but whether so or otherwise, I am now resolved upon going forward, and ascertaining the fate of Blanche Bertrand, even though I go alone."

"Who's agwine to let you go alone?" said Kenton, a little sharply; "not me, nor no other hoss o' this pinfold."

A few words of explanation from Eugene served to restore the good humor of the old woodsman; and after a short general consultation, the perilous journey was resumed, over the trail taken by the renegade and his companions.

Just before sunset our friends came to a point where the small trail they were following was intersected by a much larger one, which thenceforward passed over the same route. This betokened an increase of danger, but did not daunt our gallant little band, who resolved to keep steadily upon their course, till something more definite of good or evil should be known.

As it was now near sunset, however, they concluded to turn aside and encamp for the night. This they did; and a somewhat disagreeable night they passed; for before morning a cold, easterly storm set in, and drenched, and half benumbed them, they not having considered it prudent to start a fire.

But it seldom happens there is an evil without some good in it, and the present evil was not one of the exceptions. If the storm drenched and benumbed them, it drove their foes to close quarters; if it obliterated the trail they were following, it also did their own; and as the country was well known to more than one, and the destination of the Indians considered certain, the scouts regarded the continuance of the storm as so much in their favor, that they would be enabled to approach and reconnoitre the village in comparative safety, which would more than counterbalance any inconvenience they might suffer from the elements.

The storm did continue all the following day, and was unabated when night again shut in the scene, and our heroic little band, from a neighboring elevation, beheld the glimmering of the lights of the great Indian village they were seeking.

And now it was, with feelings peculiar to each—with every heart more quickly beating at the thought—our gallant borderers laid their plans and made their preparations for the fearful hazard of descending singly among their foes, to begin a stealthy search, through the midnight gloom, for the fair being whom it was their hope and aim to rescue from cruel and barbarous hands.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MIDNIGHT SEARCH.

At a late hour of the evening of the eventful night of which we are speaking—the Indian village having become still, the fires extinguished by the rain, and most of the warriors and their families having retired to rest—our little band of scouts stole down from their elevated camp, and cautiously and silently took their way through the woods to the open fields which immediately surrounded the town.

Everything had been planned and arranged for their government throughout the perilous adventure before them, and they were now on their way to execute one of the most hazardous undertakings of their lives. Of all the party, the negro only was left behind, safely lodged in the branches of a large tree, with directions how to proceed under all the different circumstances for which their forethought had been able to provide. Among the others it had been agreed that all should enter the town singly, at different points, and pass carefully from lodge to lodge, looking sharply, and listening keenly, in the hope that, if the prisoner were there, they might by some good fortune, either of sight or sound, discover her locality; that then the party so discovering should stealthily withdraw from the village to that point of the woods where they were now to separate; that whether she were discovered or not, no one should remain absent over a couple of hours; but in case that, by any accident, one of the party should be detected and taken, he should immediately give utterance to his loudest cries, and cause as much disturbance as possible, in order to alarm the village and attract the inhabitants to a single spot, that the others might be the better enabled to escape, and perchance take the girl with them. It was also agreed that, if a pinfold of horses should be discovered by any, that the party so discovering, if time permitted after the first alarm, should set them free, and take as many to the rallying-point as possible, there to remain until the others should come up, or the danger become so imminent as to justify a speedy flight.

Strange, wild and indescribable were the feelings which agitated the breast of our hero, as alone, after parting from his companions, he moved onward through the deep, almost rayless darkness, toward the stronghold of his foes, in quest of one whose life was far dearer to him than his own. It was a terrible venture, and he so felt it! What chance had he of success? How could he hope to discover her, even if she were an inmate of the village, by passing through it in the dead hours of night when all might be silently asleep? If he really knew she were here—knew her locality, and had his friends prepared to act in concert—it might be a different matter; there might indeed be some little foundation upon which to raise a slight hope; but now, even if found, what chance would he have, not only of taking her from her guards, but from the very center, as it were, of a hundred, perhaps a thousand, of her barbarous enemies?

"I cannot save her," he mentally said; "no virtue in me, of myself, can find her on such a night as this, in such a place, even if living, and safely take her hence; but Providence, acting through me—using me as a mere instrument—may snatch her from a horrible captivity, and restore her to her friends; and so, praying God to aid me, I will go forward to her salvation, or my own destruction."

Eugene entered the town from the south; but the night being very dark, with the rain still falling, he was obliged to grope his way forward more slowly and cautiously than was consonant with his impatient desire of reaching what he considered the crisis of his fate. The first lodge he came to was dark within and silent—and so was the next, and the next—but a low, savage growl, as he neared the fourth, warned him to turn aside and take a different direction, if he would escape the alarming howl and sharp fangs of a canine foe.

As one lodge after another was reached and passed, without the faintest trace of her he sought, a feeling of despair began to take possession of his breast. What if, after all, she could not be found, even if here? and what if she had been taken to another village? He was here, in the very heart of an Indian town, risking his life to find her; and how terrible was the thought that he might be captured at any moment, and subsequently be condemned and tortured, and she know nothing of his fate? To die for her—to save her by his death—to show her, by such devotion, how deep and pure was the love he dared not speak in her presence—he felt would be no great sacrifice; but to be taken and tortured, without bringing redemption to her, and without her knowledge, was a thought too horrible even for contemplation.

For nearly half an hour Eugene continued to grope his way among the huts of the Indian village, without hearing other sounds than the pattering of the rain and the occasional growl or bark of a mastiff, and without meeting with any startling adventure, or coming in contact with any of his friends, or getting the faintest clue to her he sought.

By this time, to the best of his judgment, he had penetrated nearly to the center of the town; and now, for the first time since entering the place, he caught the faint glimmer of a light through the crevice of a lodge some eight or ten yards distant. The sight gave him hope, though he could scarcely tell why; and approaching it as quickly as prudence would justify, he looked through the small aperture made by the wind moving slightly back a thick buffalo robe which hung at the door, and which was fastened down within to keep out the driving storm.

And as he looked, he felt his whole frame shake and quiver with a painful excitement—for there, within less than ten feet of him, her face buried in her hands, her hair disheveled, her garments torn and disarranged, sat the beautiful captive, Blanche Bertrand! She was seated upon what appeared to be a long, low couch, of rude construction, over which was spread a buffalo robe, and with several handsomely-dressed deerskins lying carelessly about, to be used for covering or not, as she might see proper. On the opposite side of the wigwam was another couch, of similar construction, and upon this sat two slightly-robed Indian females, one old and the other young; and both, with their eyes fixed upon the fair prisoner, in the attitude of persons who had suddenly started up from sleep. Between the two was a sort of rude slab-table, with an iron lamp in the center, from which issued the rays of light that had caught the attention of, and guided our hero to, his present position, and now disclosed to him all he beheld. The hut itself was a rude structure of poles, bark, skins and earth; and with the exception of a few cooking utensils, contained little in the way of furniture besides what we have mentioned. There had been some attempt at ornament, however, in the way of illuminated skins and shields, which hung around the walls—together with the antlers of a stag—a painted bow and sheaf of arrows—a silver-mounted calumet, probably of English workmanship—a few strips of wampum, and some minor articles which it is needless to mention.

But the glance of the excited Eugene scarcely took in the surroundings, and rested only upon poor Blanche and her female guard; and it required all the will of which he was master, to restrain the impulse which would have carried him forward to his own destruction, if not to that of her he had come to save.

"She is found, but how can she be rescued?" was the first seemingly unanswerable thought which flashed across his brain.

There appeared to be but one plan which might give hope of success; and that was to wait till the whole party should fall asleep, and then steal in, rouse Blanche, and get her to withdraw, silently and unperceived. But even this would be attended with the most fearful of perils; and a hundred trifling things—trifling if considered by themselves, but terribly important in their relation to the issue—might occur to thwart his design, if not to bring swift destruction upon both him and her. The guard might not again fall asleep—or, falling asleep, might be awakened by the slightest sound—and one single shriek of alarm might bring overwhelming numbers upon the daring adventurer, and crush out the last hope of poor Blanche in his own capture or death.

But only a few seconds were given Eugene for contemplation, ere his whole attention was arrested by the voice of the elder squaw, who said, in a harsh, guttural, angry tone:

"What for you wake? what for you get up so? why you no sleep?"

On hearing these words, Blanche withdrew her hands, raised her pale face proudly and haughtily, fixed her deep blue eyes, now gleaming with the fire of an unconquerable spirit, sternly upon the other, and replied, firmly but calmly:

"I sleep at no one's bidding! and so long as my limbs remain unbound, I shall rise whenever it suits my pleasure!"

"Me have white squaw bound, if no lie down and go sleep!" returned the crone. "White chief no come to squaw, me call odder brave."

"Do as you please!" rejoined Blanche; "and, so far as I have the power, so will I! You may think, because I am here alone, in the hands of so many fiends, you can subdue me—bend me to your vile will and purpose; but I warn you that mine is a spirit which will break ere it bend; and were I not restrained by the hope of being delivered by force of arms from your accursed tribe, I would soon be free from your taunts and insults!"

"How white squaw get away?" queried the other, in a sneering tone.

"That is my secret, and you are not my confidant!" said Blanche, throwing herself back on her couch, and turning her face to the opposite wall.

"By'm-by me has you tie and whip!" muttered the crone, as with her companion she also lay down, but kept her black, snake-like eyes fixed upon the light, fragile form of the still undaunted prisoner.

As Eugene listened to these words, his left hand clutched the barrel of his rifle with the gripe of a vice, and the fingers of his other worked almost convulsively with the haft of the knife which had already drank the heart's blood of one of his foes.

As Eugene still remained looking through the slight aperture into the lodge, which contained a prize more priceless to him than aught else in the world, he fancied he heard quick steps approaching; and thinking they might possibly be those of a friend, but fearing they might be those of an enemy, he drew stealthily back a few feet from the door, and close up against the side of the hut.

Scarcely had he done so, when he felt he had reason to congratulate himself upon the acuteness of his hearing; for the steps advanced straight to the door, and he could see the shadow of an arm and human figure, as the former was thrust forward in the act of pulling aside the skin that closed the entrance. It gave way but little, however, at the first effort; and the voice of the new-comer was immediately heard uttering a few impatient words in the Indian tongue. To these there came a quick reply, apparently from the younger of the squaws; and was almost instantly followed by a noise inside, as if the fastenings were being removed which held the buffalo robe to its place. The next moment the skin flapped in the wind, was thrust hurriedly aside, and the dark, shadowy figure disappeared from the sight of Eugene; who, gliding stealthily back to his former position, soon recognized by sight, as he already fancied he had by sound, the person of his most bitter and dreaded foe, Ralph Hawley the renegade.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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THERE is an heroic innocence as well as an heroic courage.

GUY PERCY'S WOOING.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

The years have flung their flights and blooms
Across Guy Percy's lonely way—
"The night—the Resident's grand reunion—
With fragrance, lights, and flowers are gay"
The same time-enchanted pictures shine
On the old walls, of form and face,
The same enchanting sea of music
Floods the room with its dancing light;
And measure and rhythm fill all the air,
And ebb, breaks on the shells of rhyme,
And mingles with the starry day-beam.
Beneath that prism rest sadness.
With gem-sparkling hair and flashing eyes,
Queen Society goes on, from room to room—
From parlor to library, from hall
To the grand hall of various feasts,
Where heavy purple shadows hang
Her Harbour Station sits apart—
Silent, unstirred, out of summer's dream
Of the old days, when the ships came in,
And life's a-tiding from her breast.
The pale clock flashes out as wan,
The stone-shrouded Resident's portrait
Guy Percy's luminous dreams!
Art, proud, and winsome, hung well
And deep tones of sweet talent,
That seemed to lift the dome and wall
Of the last glory of the years
Of the old Resident's grand queen—
And the throngs of gay and tall,
Then rocked in rosy her stately noise—
His tall form rose and stood by the door,
The purple ether, the flashing gaze,
Then lost their flowers and their fire
Her Resident's regal darkness
Guy Percy's heart grew cold and sick
For it was the same glitter and gay
Guy Percy saw—the same hands—
His face fell from the light,
And seemed to sweep a distant land
From the dark memory of those days—
The withered flowers, the stained wine,
The lonely board bewildered, the chair
In vestibule of a party dying—a * * * *
Guy Percy's heart was sick
A dower of misery, memory, shame,
Half veils her brown eyes' starry light,
And like chaos flashed her face, as like
—Is made, by the soft sunset glow,
The carry of her lips's a-wreck
Red odor of blushes rich and free,
Her hair's dark wealth of curls and braids
Her life's gold palace, rounded
Against her dainty bodice broidered—
The mingled song of wind and bird
Were lower half so softly sweet!
He gazed, her native, for a space,
Then stepped calm out every storm—
He was one human creature, and
All tears proves are rarest beauty
Guy Percy's heart was sick and cold
In favour of easy man-to-be held
Proud worthy of the poet's soul.
Of the gay spirit's gayest world!
And yet, whatever of love or truth
Still lingers in this heart of mine,
With the last memories of my youth
Is linked with thee, Lucile!
Thou knowest the legend of my days—
I loved a lady, false as fair—
The darkness struck our separate ways,
And late as a long despair
We now this kiss at my gate,
The rose on thy cottage walls,
The sweet-brier by the door
Of Warren's distant parlour,
She sighs amid her lower gaze,
Behind her splendid queen have
The simple daughter on thy knee
Are better than her crown and chair!
And, ever, in fateful listening by
I give thee back a sweet heart-song,
In honor of thy guiltless life,
Of thy pure love, and thy home—
The shadow of my wasted life
The honors of my present time—
And a dark heaven's unsearching line
I will—Bertha—will be mine!

NOT IN WRATH.

"Frank!"

"Sir." The boy started at the sound of his father's voice, while his color blighted.

Mr. Lloyd had left the house, with his arm on his shoulder, a few minutes before, on his way to a shooting not far off, where the best sport was at work; but a thought crossing his mind had induced him to return. He spoke with some strenuous of voice and manner.

He repeated the boy, looking with a half timid glance at his father's face.

"Don't go to the mill-dam to-day," said Mr. Lloyd, speaking slowly, and with emphasis.

Frank did not answer promptly. So his father said, in a tone of sharp interrogation, "Do you hear, sir?"

"Yes, sir," replied Frank.

"Very well; then see to it that I am obeyed."

And Mr. Lloyd started off again for the shooting. The boy looked after his father with a look of fear, as he was conscious of not having addressed his son in the right spirit. It would not have been an easy to have spoken more mildly, to have made the intervention in a different tone of voice, and yet been quite as likely to insure obedience.

"I wish I could control myself a little better," said the farmer, as he strode away. "I don't think this habit, peremptory mode of speaking over does much good. I'm sure it never has to make me say more obstinate, when I was a boy; not rather tended to excite rebellion. The more I command, the more I am disposed to disobey."

"What's the matter, Frank?" inquired the boy's mother, coming to the door. She had heard her husband's voice pitched in rather a harsh key, and it drew her away from her work.

"Nothing, I am answered." only father always speaks to me as if he would take my head off."

"What did he say?"

"He told me not to go to the mill-dam."

"Why did he say that?" inquired Mrs. Lloyd.

"I don't know."

"He had some good reason, no doubt; and you must be sure not to disobey him."

It was perhaps an hour later in the day, when a lad named Jacob Green met Frank on the road, a little way from his father's house. He had a fishing rod in his hand.

"Where are you going?" asked Frank.

"To the mill-dam. Won't you go along?"

"Not to-day," was answered.

Jacob strongly urged a compliance with his wishes, but Frank resisted all temptation.

"I see Jacob Green just now," said Frank, speaking to his mother a little while afterwards.

"Did you?" Mrs. Lloyd replied, in an absent way.

"Yes; and he's going to the mill-dam all alone. He's most too small a boy to be trusted there by himself—and he's very venturesome. If father hadn't said what he did, I would go there, just to see that Jacob didn't come to any harm."

"You mustn't disobey your father, it will make him very angry," said Mrs. Lloyd.

"Maybe," suggested the boy. "If I were to go to the top of the hill just above the dam, and sit and watch Jacob, he wouldn't mind. That wouldn't be going to the mill-dam, you know. And if you told him just how it was, and said that you had thought it better for me to go there on Jacob's account, I am sure he would say that I had done just right, instead of wrong."

Mrs. Lloyd thought for a little while, and then replied:

"Jacob is a small boy, and there are dangerous places about the mill-dam. I wonder how his mother can let him go there alone? Oh, if he should fall in, to be swept down under the gate, or over the dam, nothing could save him. I think you had better go, Frank, and follow him at a little way, on your father. Only, be sure not to go down to the water, unless something should call for it."

This permitted and enjoined, Frank started, off for the mill-dam, which was about a quarter of a mile distant, in a lonely valley, surrounded by woods and hills. By widening rapidly, the idea that Jacob Green might fall into the water at any moment having taken possession of his mind, he felt anxious to reach the neighborhood of the dam as quickly as possible. On gaining the wood-hill that rose steeply above the point where the water, swelling by late rains, lurged, roaring, over the dam, Frank searched with his eye, hurriedly, along the shore, up and down, for Jacob Green. But the lad was not to be seen in sight. He must have shouted his name, but a secret sense of disobedience, and the fear of punishment for disobeyed father, who might hear his voice, kept him silent. Descending part of the ridge of the hill, so as he deemed it prudent, under the circumstances, he called out several times in the name of Jacob, but no answer came.

A sudden fear now seized upon the boy's heart. Jacob must be somewhere near the water and yet, except over the dam? His heart beat like a hammer in his breast, as he ran down the hill-side, to fetch a circling sweep in his thrust. For some moments he looked breathlessly. But no sight of Little boy's safety became superior to all other emotions.

"He may have fallen in near the head-gate," he now said to himself, "and been, in the image of Jacob, clinging to some frail support, until the whirling, sucking eddies, prevented itself to his mind, Frank, with a cry, sprang down the bank from the dam floored into the mill race. Holding on to a piece of timber, he waded out before it to a high stone wall, or pier, and, as he looked down into the water, saw Jacob Green struggling under the half-opened gate, he held his breath in momentary suspense. But the lad was equal to the task. Frank drew himself up, taking a deep inspiration, and stood for some moments, panting and still. Then he stopped lightly over a narrow plank that had been thrown across the sluice into which the head-gate opened, and, on the other side of the abutments of the dam, leaned his body over and looked down. A moment more he was down into the mud whirlpool of waters that lay beneath. His head swam a little, his limbs seemed to be moved back, with a feeling of terror in his heart. If he were to fall into the water, no power on earth could save him!

A little while Frank stood on the abutment that jutted to the heavy fall of water. Then he stepped carefully across the narrow bridge that separated him from the land, and was by Jacob's side. He felt himself in a portion of safety. Slowly and cautiously now the waters were thrown around him, and every point within their range searched with his most anxious glance. But the search was entirely fruitless. Ascending the hill that rose above the dam, Frank began shouting in turn, at some distance, up the stream, letting his gaze fall upon every part of the shore. Suddenly he stopped, with an exclamation of relief, for Jacob had come into full view, sitting upon a rock that projected far into the dam, holding his fishing rod over the water, and watching the quick-dipped cork that floated on the surface.

Frank did not call to the boy, nor by any sign make known his proximity. He had come, in disobedience to his father, to watch over and protect him from harm; and the fear of hasty misjudgment on the part of the latter, when the fact of disobedience became known, seized upon his mind, and made him prefer estimate to companionship. So he sat down, concealing himself among the bushes of three or four large trees; yet keeping his head in a position to see Jacob through a small opening between them. Nearly half an hour passed, when Jacob, tired of watching his immovable cork, drew up his line, and moved down the bank to a position nearer the water, where the current of water was rushing over the dam. As he threw his line again, Frank saw, and walked along the hill above him, until he came nearly opposite to the fishing waterfall, and then sat down again to watch the lonely boy—himself more lonely.

The clearing at which Mr. Lloyd was at work with his men lay about a quarter of a mile from the mill-dam. The father had just leveled an immense sycamore, and was engaged in cutting off its trunk, with its giant limbs, when a neighbor, emerging from the wood behind him, came up and said:

"Good day, Mr. Lloyd!"

"Ah! Good day to you, Maxwell!" responded the farmer, in a hearty tone.

"Splendid land this," said the other, "but heavily timbered."

"Oh! but that too much! And I positively forbade him going near the dam!" Mr. Lloyd's exclamation was followed by a sigh.

"If it was my boy, I'd take the hide off him," said Maxwell.

"He'll be sorry for this to the latest day of his life!" And with these threatening words on his lips, Mr. Lloyd started away in the direction of the mill-dam.

Near the place where Jacob had dropped his line, the decayed trunk of a fallen tree was projected several feet into the water. Here, with more appetizer from want of success in his sport, the boy, in something of a spirit of desperation, walked out to the end of this trunk, and threw his line far up by the stream as he could fling it. Then he watched the cork as it floated rapidly down with the current, hoping that more fish would seize the bait and drag it under. But no desires of the sort stirred even the trembling motion, or, seeing, how, by the real danger of the little boy, Frank started up, and was about calling to him to come back upon the shore, when the sharp crack of a falling limb broken by a heavy tread, caused him to turn hastily, and there stood his father, with a face almost black by cruel anger, one hand outstretched, and the other uplifted and grasping a heavy rod.

"Oh, Jacob don't!" exclaimed the frightened boy. "Oh, don't!"

"Didn't I tell you not to come down?" was the stern response, and the father's grey lightened on the rod, as he seized the boy's arm. The head descended, the blow fell, bringing with it a shriek of terror from the boy, and a wild cry of horror swept up from the water, echoing from the opposite hill-side. The eyes of father and son both turned upon the lonely boy, and the cry came. Jacob had fallen into the dam, and was already sighted in the high current. Making a sudden spring, Frank freed himself from the grasp of his father, and then went leaping down the hill with the speed of a deer. It was some moments before Mr. Lloyd recovered sufficient presence of mind to follow. But when he was half way to the water, Frank had reached a point below the floating boy, and was standing on the lower brink of a projecting flat land low over the water, in the hope of being able to reach the boy as he came down in the strong current. But the waves had now at a distance, and the current grew too powerful to resist.

For some moments Mr. Lloyd stood paralyzed upon the dam. The struggling boys were beyond his reach, and he felt his strength giving down. Then he commenced running along the bank, his eyes fixed on the boys, and his mind trying in vain to decide as to the way best quickly down the stream. Suddenly he saw Frank spring into the water within a few feet of the dam, yet still, if the eyes of Mr. Lloyd did not deceive him, in a line with the abutment, and a third hope sprang up in his mind that they might strike against the pier, and thus be arrested in their progress, instead of being outwards in the current, and over the deadly waterfall.

Mr. Lloyd stood still in fearful suspense, his lips parted, his eyes dilated, and his pale and wild face as pale as ashes. Suddenly he struck his hands together, and uttered a cry of joy from the bound. The drowning boys had swept against the pier, and Frank was clinging to the stone. Throwing off his coat as he ran, and drawing off his boots, he called the head gate, Mr. Lloyd leaped into the water, and swam to the side of the inside of the gate where he had seen the boys cling. In a few strong strokes he was there, grasping the boys with the two boys now insensible, and dragged them to the shore, and safely ashore, and succeeded, though not without difficulty, in getting them out. But the water was not very shallow, and he could clamber up the bank. In a few minutes, by applying the proper means, he restored the lad better than inwards into the life-long contract.

The first care of Mr. Lloyd was to restore, if possible, animation to the senseless form of Jacob, and watching the apple-dropped cork that floated on the surface of the water.

"Oh, my son! my son!" he cried, as the boy's color began to return, and he saw that he was safe, "can you forgive me for the cruelty I have done you?"

"Father, I did not mean to disobey you," said Frank, in a voice that was yet tremulous with fear, "but I thought that Jacob might get into danger, and I wanted to be near him, and the fear of hasty misjudgment on the part of my father, when the fact of disobedience became known, seized upon my mind, and made him prefer estimate to companionship. So I sat down, concealing my

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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PERSONAL AUTHORITY.

"Events from time to time change the age's face,
New wants find cravings, new ways to change, his place."

It is difficult for us to determine the exact degree of personal authority in ancient times; but from all that we can learn in the records of antiquity, it is very evident that it existed then in greater degree than now. That is, the authority of individuals was greater in the ancient times; the authority of kings, of magistrates, of parents, of sages or philosophers, of saints, and of venerable men. Even in remote sections, in small villages, and rural districts, where primitive manners are more preserved, and to which the personal independence of modern intellectualism has not reached, the same unanimous genuflexion before the patriarchal times is the reverence exhibited for virtuous men, and the unassailable dignity and worthiness of security in following their footsteps or attending their precepts. Heaven be thanked for such men still, particularly. It is rather to be with them than with ordinary individuals in the hour of danger. If it thunder fiercely, or if the wind rage and tear up trees, and blow off the roofs of houses and cottages, the neighbors will run instinctively into the house of the venerable sage—loath itself seeming has found should be to descend with them to safety. Both feelings of respect are natural to man; but it is in rural life where the development is most perfect. There the personal virtues are believed, because more nearly approached; and the lessons of the dignum are more accessible than the lessons of maximum. It is easier understood whether they are good fathers, good husbands, good mothers, and good men. A man is indomitable to be just in a city, and he can only be known to his townsmen as an orator, a magistrate, or occupying official, who may, by the exercise of mere intellectual abilities, assume all the authority desired by the public, and then cast off as the threshold of his own house. Hence, talents in town has taken the place of more general worth in the exercise of authority, and not being modified by virtues, it is evinced what by an immense multiplicity of opposing talent, authority itself has left individuals, and taken refuge in universal bodies, as in the legislature or system.

We have often often in our boyhood beautiful exhibitions of the natural reverence of youth for age, and for students crown of glory, the hoary head. We have seen a hundred little urchins just let loose from school, and in all appearance ready for any other discipline but that of bodily fear, suddenly subdued in respectful silence, and awful yet fond regard, at the cold and placid appearance of a venerable clergyman who used to exemplify, in his daily duties of benevolence, the sublime virtues daily depicted by Goldsmith, in his Deserted Village, and which we hope, for the sake of humanity, is still to be found in more hallowed nooks of yet unexemplied society:—

"The service past, around the pious man,
With steps unfeigned, the world forgot, as he,
Even children follow'd with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

We see that this is a liberal, but we never saw it in a city. Such a man would be passed by in the most ostentatious and unknown way. If he had an unfashionable hat on, he would be the object of ridicule and rude witticism to many; and if he had a pocket-handkerchief, and a snuff-box in his pocket-behind, some little conveyancer would, in spite of reverence due to age and virtue, make such a transference of the property, and feel as little compunction of conscience as if he had "served him right," and should the odd gentleman comment on the circumstance as a misfortune, he would be generally affect a subject for merriment, and he himself would be obliged by conscience to bear the perpetration of a crime. Large cities are not the places for individual encouragement of virtue. The radius does not dwell in the crowded streets or the market-place; it is retired in the habits; it prefers the mountains and the village; it is a pastoral in the silent times, and dies in the smoke of a manufacturing district, or amid the heat of a populous metropolis.

Nor does this remark apply to public men alone but to parents also. Filial reverence is less vigorous in towns than in the country, more especially as the parent has adopted town principles of personal independence and individual rights. These intoxicated communicate themselves to children, and by them are applied to their own inordinate wishes. Both parents and school-teachers complain at present of increased sauciness on the part of children. The complaint is not new, we believe. It has always been the complaint of age that the present times are more unruly than the past. Even in the days of Solomon it was so. "Say not thou what is the cause that the former days were better than these, for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this thing." But in this conclusion of the wise king we cordially concur. It is not wise in any man to regret the past; for the world is undergoing a course of education, and the instantaneous fion of modern times is an important part of the course. There is good mixed up with the evil; there is an increase of intelligence, which, in due time, will surmount the evil; but the simple fact, notwithstanding, may remain, that, compared to ancient times, there is greater independence of authority in the city, and without local ordinances in schools and families. Boys even dare as well as their parents, to think for themselves and, unhappily for them when they will be free from control. Girls imitate their mothers—the ruling fashions of the day—and are educated from their parents who withhold their sanction; and pupils forsake their teachers to leave their schools, if the teachers correct them for misbehavior, or refuse to allow them unreasonable indulgences—destructive of order and scholastic discipline. What children feel is very difficult to ascertain; but we are very little in New York or in vicinity of that holy fear and respect with which we used to look upon our elders.

PERSONALITIES.

Mr. Bonner, Sir:—I believe you an article taken from the ——, which criticises your system of advertising rather severely. Being a subscriber to your paper, I would be glad to see it, if you could send it to me.

Yours, &c., ——.

Sir:—I have no objection to personal controversies in the Ledger. If your article is of interest to the public, do not send matter of that sort served up in the cold type and dull style of a newspaper. Long little papers all over the country that seem to have nothing better to do than to be impertinent and abuse each other. We prefer not to stoop to such petty, unmanly controversies. Others can make a paper for the people—not a medium for squarrying with or villifying one editor by another. So that, hereafter, when our friend "H. P." sees the "Lancet" mentioned in any other paper, either in a complimentary or censorious manner, he will please bear in mind that, under no circumstances, is he going to be drawn into a personal controversy. The Lancet, with its treasure-house of valuables, is the property of the people, positively unknown and obscure sheets. We mean to be such, and, therefore, we shall never either go or see, and to make each of our readers feel that the Lancet is his paper—and ours.

A MISERABLE QUIBBLE.

A miserable quibble has been put forth by the voluntary organs of the British Government in this country, to shield that imperfidiant and tyrannical Government from the just consequences of the part of their naval captains in boarding our merchantmen. The quibble is that we confound the right of search, which has been given up by the British Government, with the right of visitation, which is not given up. This is an absurd distinction. If a British cruiser has a right to "search" vessels of American ship and compel her to receive him on board, she is of course under his jurisdiction, and no one else is entitled to "visit" her. She is for the year as well as an hour, if he so elect. It was the principle of conscription and not the mode of execution which we fought and conquered in the war of 1812, and we will not go to war again for a mere principle again, it need be. We will not permit the existence of any principle claimed and exercised by us to intrude themselves upon the decks of our vessels.

ATTEMPTED TOO RUDE.

It is a noble compliment which Shakespeare pays to Cleopatra, when Enobarbus, the confidant of Antony, the companion wherein is that they do nothing successfully—often idly, utterly in what they easy to accomplish.

This tendency is specially observable in young people. Their youthful blood is warm and strong. The heart beats freely. The pulse is vigorous, by exciting activity which is likely to be indicate in manhood's years. A score of "young life" this every vein, and thrills along every nerve and fibre and brain to the heart. For these reasons youth is hopeful, and active looking forward to expectation of something to come. What young person is always dismissed; and hence it not only expects but is sure to succeed in every thing it does. Success things at a time. This sometimes leads to disappointment and failure. All the great men of the age begin thing of the kind ever attempted; and now he is the most successful man in the world, and has a still greater ungodside. He proposes to import, next autumn, for the education of his fellow citizens, the entire grand opera and ballet company of Her Majesty's Theatre, London, together with all their instruments, wardrobes, and costly paraphernalia. This is certainly a most stupendous undertaking, and will bring down upon him a little more ones in all his old prominence and glory.

MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL.

Some people talk and behave as if they thought not was single particular true labor. Work is the one of the most tiresome things; in human experience, to long-continued idleness. No one knows a wealthy youth who got so tired of a career of this sort, that he actually went to his guardian or parent asked it, as a favor, to be permitted to work, day and night, along with field hands, at the usual rate wages. Although his guardian laughed at the very idea, and the laborers looked, he persisted in his request till it was granted. Then he actually worked everybody that knew him by working unceasingly for seven months. In no long time he not only found true rest to his body and mind, but at the same time made himself useful in the world.

Do we Live in the Nineteenth Century?—A few days ago we received a pamphlet entitled, "The Baptists, a Period: opposed for revelation and enjoyment." The document is written by a man who calls himself a clergyman, and is no more nor less than an argument for the observation of the Sabbath. The only comment that we care to make on this work is contained in the caption of our paragraph, "Do we live in the nineteenth century?"

A man grows rich by securing poor; an extravagant man grows poor by securing rich.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New York.

A LEAF FOR PAUL FRY.

There may be some authoresses who like to be stared at: I am not going to contest that point: there may be some who are grateful, when they enter a forty-boat or car, to have somebody stage immediately in the elbe, and whisper loud enough to be heard from Maine to California—Look! that's Miss Fern Fadwell, the celebrated; but I am not one who like, when they sit down in an omnibus, to have a lady (?) or gentleman (?) opposite make the same remark, with the following addition: Light hair, hasn't she?—very!—tell! I guessed it black! —wonder what's her fancy for always wearing black!—how do you like her nasutils?—funny that she always wears a straw bonnet, and various other edifying remarks of the same nature. This may be very civil. I don't look on it so: it is not. There may be some authoresses who like, when they go to church, to have the people in the next pew discuss their necks in the attempt to ascertain what Daily Daffodil looks like; whether she holds her hymn-book upside down, or does not sing, or is guilty of the heterodoxy of not following—under what's her fancy for always wearing black?

RACHEL, THE WASHERWOMAN.

A Ballad.

BY ALICE CARY.

At the north end of our village stands,
With gable black and high,
A weatherbeaten house—I've stopt,
Often, as I went by,

To see the strip of bleaching grass
Slipped brightly in between
The long, straight rows of hollyhocks,
And currant-bushes, green;

The clumsy bench beside the door,
And oaken washing-tub,
Where poor old Rachel used to stand,
And rub, and rub, and rub!

Her blue checked apron speckled with
The suds, so snowy white;
From morning when I went to school
Till I went home at night,

She never took her sunburnt arms
Out of the steaming tub,—
We used to say 'twas weary work
Only to hear her rub.

With sleeves stretched straight upon the grass
The washed shirts used to lie;
By dozens I have counted them
Some days, as I went by.

The burly blacksmith, battering at
His red-hot iron bands,
Would make a joke of wishing that
He had old Rachel's hands!

And when the sharp and ringing strokes
Had doubled up his shoe,
As crooked as old Rachel's back,
He used to say 'twould do.

And every village housewife, with
A conscience clear and light,
Would send for her to come and wash
An hour or two at night!

Her hair beneath her cotton cap
Grew silver-white, and thin;
And the deep furrows in her face
Ploughed all the roses in.

Yet patiently she kept at work—
We school-girls used to say
The smile about her sunken mouth
Would quite go out, some day.

Nobody ever thought the spark,
That in her sad eyes had shone,
Burned outward from a living soul
Immortal as their own.

And though a tender flush sometimes
Into her cheek would start,
Nobody dreamed old Rachel had
A woman's loving heart!

At last she left her heaps of clothes
One quiet autumn day,
And stript from off her sunburnt arms
The weary suds away;

That night within her moonlit door
She sat alone—her chin
Sunk in her hand—her eyes shut up
As if to look within.

Her face uplifted to the star
That stood so sweet and low
Against old crazy Peter's house—
(He loved her long ago!)

or heart had worn her body to
A handful of poor dust—
Her soul was gone to be arrayed
In marriage robes, I trust.

RICHARD HOFFMAN:

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER LII.

LADY BELL'S PLOT.

In the midst of his own happiness, and the feeling was bright and strong as youth and love could make it, Richard Tyrrell did not forget the duty he had undertaken to the poor, forlorn youth, who had once been his companion, and, in the eyes of the world, almost, if not quite, his equal.

In their long and frequent conversations, he found occasion to study his character, and quickly discovered that his errors had truly been errors of ignorance. No one had ever taught him that honesty was to be adhered to for honesty's sake. All he knew was that the world both looked upon and treated him as a pariah, and he had retaliated, as outcasts generally do.

Regularly did our hero devote several hours daily in teaching Jack to read and write, and it was extraordinary how rapid a progress he made. Gratitude is a powerful incentive.

"Now, Jack," said his instructor, "when you have mastered the next two rules of arithmetic, and put your words together a little better, I promise you a recompense you little dream of."

"I don't require any," replied his pupil. "Your kindness to me is quite recompense enough."

"Aye, but you will enjoy this."

"I won't have it!" exclaimed Jack Manders, with something like his former speech and determination. "You have done enough for me already, more than my whole life can ever repay."

"Suppose it was to present you to an old friend again?"

"Poor Caleb," answered the former.

"I don't mean Caleb."

"I have no other friend."

"Have you forgotten Lillian?"

Her former protector bounded from his seat as if he had received an unexpected electrical shock, and stood for an instant mute with surprise and emotion.

"Don't jest with me," he said; "pray don't jest with me. How should Lilly be in India, poor little angel, her sorrows are over, I trust, by this time."

"I trust so, too," observed Richard, smilingly.

Jack Manders looked at him anxiously.

"But not in the way you suppose. Circumstances which I must explain hereafter, for I am not yet in possession of all the facts myself, drew on the orphan the protection of one of the noblest and best of men. He and his wife have reared her like their own child. She accompanied them from England."

"Oh, Mr. Richard!" exclaimed the lad, "can this be true? And yet I am a fool to ask it—for Providence, that you so often talked to me about, watched over you. And why should I doubt her escaping from the cruelty of Mike and Andrew, and the fine lady who employed them?"

It is needless to say how earnestly Jack devoted himself to the task of self-improvement. His instructor, even sooner than he expected, found himself called upon to fulfill his promise.

Previous to doing so, he found it necessary once more to consult Sir Charles Fourreau, for he looked upon his recommendation to conceal a portion of his early life from Lillian in the light of a command.

"This is indeed remarkable," exclaimed the gallant soldier, when he had heard him to an end; "and Providence, which is wiser than poor blind mortals dream of, is working for our good. This is the first time that I have heard of Lady Boothroyd having been mixed up in the affair. I must see Rose and her husband."

Both were sent for. Mark Rayner, whose exemplary conduct in his regiment, to say nothing of the influence of Lady Bell, had won for him the grade of sergeant-major, was quickly summoned, together with his wife, to the presence of the colonel. When they beheld him seated in the library with our hero by his side, both dreaded that the explanation they felt anxious to avoid was now inevitable, for they had remarked the attentions of Richard to Lillian.

"Mark," said the baronet, "I have sent for you in order to obtain some information respecting my adopted child, which you alone can give. That you will afford it me, and truthfully, it would be injustice to doubt."

"Certainly, colonel."

"Whose child is Lillian?"

"The daughter of an old comrade and school-fellow," replied the husband of Rose, "named Barny Gee, who was formerly a soldier in India."

"And related to you?"

"No, colonel."

"How came you, then, to take charge of his orphan, and, having done so, to place her in the hands of a wretch who treated her with cruelty?"

"Speak, Mark," said his wife; "better to suffer for truthfulness, than deceive those who have so nobly befriended us."

"Had she no relatives to protect her?"

"Yes—an uncle; one of the kindest, simplest-hearted beings in the world—Simon Gee, a weaver in our village."

"Did he reject her?" inquired the baronet.

"No."

"Die, then?"

"No."

"What am I to understand?"

"That she was stolen from him!" exclaimed Rose.

The colonel knit his brows as he repeated the

GETTING ON TRACK.

words "stolen from him." He was one of those men who never compromise with principle.

"By whom?"

"By my unhappy husband," replied Rose, "and myself, for I shared his guilt. But it was forced upon us. Vainly we struggled to avoid the crime; we had fallen into the hands of one who mocked at our prayers, and knew not the meaning of pity."

"Lady Boothroyd?" demanded the baronet.

The unhappy wife, believing that the vindictive woman had fulfilled her threat, and denounced Mark as the murderer of the keeper, could scarcely articulate the word "Yes."

"And her motives?"

Rose briefly related the dispute which had so long existed between Sir Norman and his tenants, touching the right of shooting on the common, the arrival of Barny Gee on New Year's eve, the poaching party, and its fatal results.

"Mark, I presume, was one of them?" observed Sir Charles.

"He was."

"I will not press you with any further questions," said the gentleman, "although my opinion is clear that he yielded to a groundless fear. For, even had he been present on the occasion, and fired the fatal shot, a thing difficult to prove, the crime could only have amounted to manslaughter."

These words were the first gleam of consolation respecting the horrible event which had exercised such a fatal influence upon her happiness that Rose had received, for they afforded her hope, lessened the fear which haunted her, and she looked towards her husband in surprise, mingled with speechless gratitude.

"Still I cannot comprehend her ladyship's motives," continued the speaker, "for such an extraordinary step."

"Pride!" exclaimed Rose. "After poor Barny's death, a paper was found upon him signed by Lieutenant Alan Boothroyd, the brother of Sir Norman, stating that the wounded man had saved his life. The whole village cried shame upon the heartless lord of the manor, and she felt that whilst Lillian remained at St. Faith's, the events of New Year's eve would not be forgotten."

"Possible," thought the gentleman, "but improbable, for the abduction was a clear case of felony." Then, speaking aloud, he asked "if there was any doubt of Lillian being really the child of Barny?"

"Not the least!" exclaimed both husband and wife; "he brought her with him on the night of his arrival, and left her in the care of his brother."

Having dismissed them with the assurance that he should still continue his protection to Mark, the worthy man turned to our hero, who had hitherto listened in silence to the conversation, and asked his opinion.

"I believe her ladyship had some other motive," replied Richard Tyrrell, decidedly; "the one assigned is ridiculously inadequate."

"I think so, too; and to discover it shall be the object of my endeavors. You know the man, I believe, to whose charge she gave poor Lillian?"

"Yes."

"And his character?"

"Most vile; he forced his nephew to dishonesty."

"All of which confirms my suspicions," observed the baronet. "The story of your former companion interests me, independently of his protection of Lillian, who has spoken of him and described him to me a thousand times. I will prepare her for the meeting," he added, "by relating to her as much of your story as is necessary to explain the kind interest you have taken in his welfare."

The following day Jack, who had already recovered something of his former appearance, and been well dressed by his protector, accompanied him to the residence of Sir Charles Fourreau. Lillian, whose grateful heart recollected him only as a boy, sprang forward to meet him with the apparent intention of offering her cheek to his salute. But a feeling of maidenly modesty restrained her, and she extended her hand, exclaiming—

"Oh! how happy I feel at once more beholding you."

Jack colored deeply. He scarcely recognized in the graceful, lovely girl before him the timid child that trembled at every word Mike uttered, and in her helplessness had clung to him for his protection. He now saw her surrounded by affectionate friends, in the splendid home of her second parents; and yet, somehow, the change did not afford him unmixed pleasure, it made the distance between them too apparent.

"You are very good, Miss," he faltered, "to recollect me!"

"Call me Lilly," replied our heroine, her eyes filling with tears. "And as for recollecting you, my heart must be insensible to every sentiment of gratitude before I forget you. Were you not to me as a brother?"

"A very humble one."

"But a true one," interrupted the fair girl; "tell me all that has passed since Mike took you from the cottage; I am anxious to learn."

With some slight hesitation, for Jack Manders had never before found himself in such society, the poor fellow narrated the cruel manner in which his uncle had trepanned him, the brutal treatment he had experienced on board the Caradoc, where, but for the kindness of Bunce and Caleb, he must have succumbed to the captain's systematic persecution.

"Heaven reward them for their goodness," sighed Lillian, deeply moved at the recital of her former companion's sufferings.

"Who is this Caleb?" inquired Lady Bell.

"An apprentice on board ship."

"And how was he treated?"

"Scarcely better than myself."

"Richard," exclaimed Lillian, her countenance flushed with indignation at the tale of sorrow, "can we not contrive some means to rescue this poor fellow from the heartless tyranny of his captain?"

"I have been thinking of it," replied our hero.

"Alas, he has signed his indentures," added Jack.

The fair pleader turned an imploring look upon Sir Charles.

"I can take but one step to liberate him from his slavery," observed his guardian.

"And that is?"

"By an appeal to a court of justice."

"Captain Gall would murder him," exclaimed Jack, "before it could be decided. I tried it in China, before the consul."

"And the result?"

"They refused to listen to me," replied the young man, blushing deeply, for he but too well remembered the cause.

"Can nothing be done?" said Lillian, anxiously.

"Of course there can," answered Lady Bell, whose beneficent heart rejoiced in alleviating sorrow in whatever form it presented itself to her notice. "The first thing will be to get him on shore."

"I will undertake that," exclaimed our hero.

"And the next?" said her husband, smilingly—for there is little doubt he had an inkling of her purpose.

"Enlist him into your regiment," answered his wife. "A court of justice alone could compel you to give him up."

"That is true."

"Where the question must first be tried."

"Solon could not have come to a more wise conclusion."

"And his friends could then bring forward proofs of cruelty sufficient to justify the breaking of the indentures, or whatever you call them."

There was very little doubt but Lady Bell had suggested the only real solution of the difficulty; and the question was, how to proceed to insure the escape of Caleb. As a matter of course, Sir Charles could take no part in that.

"Go away, Charlie," exclaimed his wife. "We are plotting treason. You must not listen to us."

"Certainly not."

"Or thwart us."

"Still less."

"When the time comes for you to act as an ally, you shall be called upon," added the lady, playfully.

The baronet withdrew to the veranda, lit a cigar, and, seeing Major Plinlimmon walking on the parade-ground, hastened to join him.

"Now that we are alone, the council of war is opened," resumed her ladyship, with mock gravity. "In the first place, you will require assistance, for, no doubt, since the escape of Jack, the monster of a captain has taken double precautions to prevent his companion following his example."

This was pronounced a positive conclusion.

"In the first place, there is Rayner."

"You forget," observed Lillian, "that he is a soldier."

"He need not go in uniform," was the reply to the objection; "and we can trust to him. There are several of the officers," she continued; "but, on second thoughts, which some wise heads pronounce to be invariably the best, we will not employ them."

"I must suggest one exception," said Richard.

"And who is that in favor of?"

"Fred Wharton."

"Your melancholy friend," exclaimed Lady Bell, with a laugh. "I had forgotten him; he may be trusted; for, beneath an armor of reserve, I am much deceived if there beats not a kind heart."

"You only do him justice."

"I had forgotten all this while that we have a friend in the enemy's camp, a sailor on board the Caradoc," exclaimed Richard.

"And what is his name?" inquired Lillian.

Our hero looked at Jack for a reply; he had forgotten it.

"Bunce," replied the youth.

Lady Bell gravely wrote it down in her note-book, and then ran over the contents of the page on which she had all the time been scribbling.

"Let me see," she exclaimed, "our opponents are Captain Gall, his mate, and the crew of the Caradoc, minus Bunce."

"Exactly so."

"To meet them we have Richard, myself——"

"A tower of strength," said Richard, gallantly.

"Thank you, but don't interrupt me," replied the lady. "Next, Lieutenant Fred Wharton, and Jack Manders. Why, what are we deliberating about? the odds are so completely in our favor that I almost fear we shall be accused of cowardice in the event of employing all our strength."

At this good-humored sally there was a general smile.

"Still, we wait for orders," observed our hero.

"You shall have them."

Lady Bell hastily wrote a few lines, tore them from the case, and placed them in the hands of Richard.

"Excellent!" he exclaimed; "this cannot fail. Your ladyship would make an excellent commander-in-chief."

"You being my aide-de-camp, I suppose?" replied the lady. "But seriously, I think my project cannot fail, for it has humanity on its side, and zealous hearts to execute it."

The council being ended, Sir Charles was beckoned to rejoin them from the veranda.

Full of his generous design of liberating Caleb from the tyranny of Captain Gall, Richard Tyrrell lost no time in securing the assistance of the young cornet—the very fellow to feel his heart swell at a story of oppression, for he had suffered from it; and the memory of wrong is one of the last that fades.

The usually impassible countenance of Fred Wharton flushed as he listened to the description of the poor lad's sufferings; and his clear blue eyes—in which thought and contemplation revealed themselves—flashed with a fire which a casual observer would have deemed them incapable of concentrating or expressing.

Calm does not always prove content;
But, like the frost on Etna's brow,
Too oft it hides the fires unspent,
Which rage beneath the chilling snow.

"Will you assist me?" demanded our hero, as he concluded his narrative.

"Will I not?" exclaimed the young man, warmly. "The question is almost a treason to our friendship: for it is to suppose me heartless."

"Not so. But the object of our benevolent exertion is one so far removed from your sphere that possibly you might feel——"

The speaker paused and hesitated.

"Go on," said his friend.

"But slight interest in the fortunes of a poor sailor lad. His birth, I believe, is exceedingly humble; but his heart——"

"It is from the heart I judge him," exclaimed Fred Wharton. "I am sick of the herald's mockery—the idol-worship which the wrongly-judging world pays to the adventitious accidents of rank and fortune. If ever I felt thankful for my own position in the social scale, it arises from the fact that it permitted me to choose my friends without reference to the opinions and prejudices of society—to grasp honor by the hand wherever I encountered it, and select worth instead of tinsel, gold instead of pinchbeck—although the latter may have received the stamp of fashion. Fashion!" he added, warmly, "I detest it! It is the mask hiding a moral death's head—the painting which veils the sepulchre!"

"In that case," observed Richard, quietly, "all we have to do is to concert the means."

"There," said the cornet, "I must trust entirely to you. I have an arm to assist, but a poor head to invent. What is it you propose?"

"Our first care must be to let Caleb know that he has friends who are both willing and able to assist him."

"Certainly."

"The next to contrive the means of his evasion from the Caradoc, which, I fear, may be difficult, for, since the escape of Jack Manders, the ruffianly commander is more than ever on his guard."

"Why not appeal to justice?"

"It would be useless. The poor fellow is an apprentice. His tyrant has him completely in his power."

"Surely the evidence of Jack, describing the treatment he has received——"

"Impossible."

"How so?"

"I cannot explain my reasons to you, but they are imperative. Only as a last resource can the victim I have already rescued from his brutal tyranny appear against him in a court of justice."

Our readers are perfectly aware of what those reasons were. Richard Tyrrell did not wish it to be known that his former companion and playfellow had ever lived by the exertion of a talent which, however ingenious, society has long since decided upon reprobating; or, in other words, that he had been a pickpocket.

"Do you doubt me?" added the speaker.

"No," exclaimed the young man, seriously. "For what is friendship if a doubt can shake it? Proceed."

"The secret is not mine," observed our hero; "or it would have been no longer one. It affects only my friend."

"He is your friend, then?"

"A very humble one," said, Richard; "but not the less valued on that account. We were boys—I may say children—together, and circumstances made me attached to him. He had fallen into evil hands. The man who should have protected him turned out his greatest enemy."

"The old story," ejaculated Wharton.

"Sought to corrupt his heart by implanting lessons of vice, and training him to crime, before he had reached an age to distinguish the difference between them."

"The wretch!"

"In the midst of this social degradation poor Jack displayed such goodness of heart, that an angel might have wept over his errors, and would have judged them far more mercifully than man."

"There you are right," exclaimed his hearer. "Man judges the crime alone—Heaven the temptation. But pray proceed. I have no longer any wish to listen to details which honor requires should be concealed. On one point, at least," he added, with a smile, "I may praise myself."

"And what is that?" inquired Richard Tyrrell, with a slight feeling of surprise. "I never heard you yet praise yourself for any one good quality, although your nature teems with them; enthusiastically just to others," he added, "you are severe only to yourself."

"I was simply about to remark that my friendship is stronger, far stronger, than my curiosity; and now let us change the subject. I am sick of the eternal *Ego* in conversation. Our first step is to communicate with the lad Caleb."

"It is."

"How do you propose to accomplish it? Not by going on board the Caradoc yourself, and accepting the ruffian's hospitality? You cannot wear a mask, even with a wretch like Captain Gall."

"Certainly not," replied his friend, emphatically. "As for the means of communicating with him, I have already arranged that. The after proceeding we must leave to fortune and the chapter of accidents. You know Hirim?"

"Your native groom? yes."

"The boy is intelligent," said his master, "speaks English perfectly; and what is better for our purpose, is truthful and devoted to me. Since I threatened to dismiss my steward for ill-using him, I believe he would risk his life for me."

"Which only proves," observed Wharton, "that few soils are so barren but the seeds of gratitude will take root in them, and expand, in time, into a hardy flower. You intend to make Hirim your medium of conversation with the ship?"

"I have so arranged it."

"Has the commander ever seen him?"

"I believe he has."

"Will he not recognize him—not by his features, but your livery?"

"That is the only risk; and to obviate it I intend to disguise him in the dress of one of the dingie boys, who ply their trade in fruit from ship to ship in the Hooghly. It is possible that he may not succeed in getting on board the first, or even the second time; but, by selling his wares cheaply, and furnishing himself with the freshest, I have little doubt of his ultimately succeeding."

"How will he recognize Caleb?" demanded his hearer.

"Jack has described his person so minutely that he cannot mistake him," answered our hero. "Besides, you have no idea how quick and clever Hirim is. Nature, in one of her caprices, has given him the tact of a diplomat, the agility of a monkey, and the cunning of a serpent."

"An epigram which characterises the wisdom of the East," exclaimed the young soldier, with a smile. "You ought to have been a portrait-painter, instead of a merchant."

CHAPTER LIII.

THE RESULT OF LADY BELL'S PLOT.

From the day of Jack's escape, Captain Gall had no other victim on whom he dared to exercise the brutal tyranny of his cruel nature than poor Caleb, whom he suspected of having assisted the fugitive to leave the ship. His first impulse, after questioning him more like an Old Bailey lawyer than a seaman, and failing to obtain the least clue, was to order the boy to be lashed up for punishment.

"We are in port," suggested the first mate.

The captain repeated the order with an oath.

"Weel," said the cautious Scot, "ye mun e'en gang your ain gait. It's no' my affair, but I ken the consequences."

He gave the order to the men.

We need scarcely remind our readers that for the commander of a merchantman to flog a sailor in port, within appeal to the civil authorities, is a stretch of power almost unheard-of in the service, and totally at variance with maritime law—a fact no man on board the Caradoc was better aware of than Bunce.

It was not without reason that the crew had given him the name of the sea-lawyer.

The old seaman heard the order with astonishment.

"What!" he exclaimed, as Caleb, who, hopeless of avoiding his punishment, had already begun to strip; "you don't mean to stand it?"

"What can I do?" replied the lad, mournfully.

"Refuse."

"It would be useless."

"I don't know that; I'll back you for one."

Several of the crew promised to stand by him, for all were sick of the rough usage the victim had so long been subjected to.

"Did you hear me?" shouted the captain, furious that his orders had not yet been obeyed.

There was a cry of shame.

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Rising in port gave the ruffian countenance—he knew how slightly a stanch the men would have of obtaining justice in India. He strutted, therefore, into the midst of them, his eyes flashing fire, brandling curses, threats, and imprecations at their heads.

"Pish," he exclaimed, "a mutiny; but we are not at sea now."

"That's why you have no right to fog him," replied Dance. "It's against both law and justice. You may starve, and look, big, Captain Gall," he added, "but I ain't afraid on you—you know it into spitching the truth."

As our readers are aware, it was not the first occasion on which the speaker had interposed between his comrades and the oppressor; and this last attempt filled the cup of bitterness and ill-feeling towards him.

"Dog!" he exclaimed, enraged at not being able to carry out his design of punishing Caleb; "you have done nothing but preach mutiny since I shipped you on board the Caroline!"

"Dooced glad to unship," replied the old man.

This, however, was not the captain's game. The difficulty of procuring fresh hands in Calcutta is too well known to all who have traded to the port. It not being prudent, therefore, to send him off, or turning him adrift, by which he would only inflict a less open himself, Captain Gall determined to make not only Dance, but the entire crew, feel his resentment in another way—by stopping their liberty, not allowing one of the men to go on shore.

To accomplish this he had only to go before a magistrate, and make out such a description of their intention to desert; backed by Mr. Chatsbee in-deed, to whom he was consigned, he could with facility effect.

With this resolution he retired to his cabin to draw, previous to going on shore.

"Saved for the present," murmured the lad.

The mate now came forward, and ordered the men to their duty. This was a command they could not lawfully refuse to obey, and encouraged by the old sailor and the poor, outraged boy were left together.

"Thank you," said the former.

"Thanks me! for what?" demanded Dance.

"Your kindness."

"Well, there may be something in that," replied the seaman, scratching, "as far as feelin' goes; but I wouldn't give a hankers, mind you, about the man who hadn't the pluck to stand up for his mate. Captain would never be tyrauch if the crews only stuck by one another."

"I fear for you."

"For me!" exclaimed the former speaker, turning his quid, and giving his inexpressible the true professional hitch. "Lord bless you, I ain't agoin' to give the skipper no hold on me; it isn't for nothin' the crew elected me their headsayer. I know my game. I only wish I could see yours as clearly; but there hasn't been a night since we left a single plait in the compass to steer your course by. How much longer have they to run, do you know?"

"About two years."

"Sorry for it."

"I shall be dead by that time," observed Caleb, with a sigh; "and, if it were not for my poor mother, I should scarcely regret it, but she has no one to look up to for protection but me."

"And yet she 'prenticed you to the skipper?"

"Not my mother, but her husband."

"Your father?"

"My father-in-law," replied the boy. "Every one enough him such an excellent man; people said when she married him that he would prove a father to her daughter."

Dance gave an emphatic whistle; with his usual perspicacity, he began to see through the whole affair.

"Honey, I suppose," he observed.

"What I am of age."

"And if you die before?"

"It goes to my mother, and consequently to her husband," replied Caleb; "and you may know the reason why Captain Gall was selected for my shipper. I only wonder that he has not worked me to death long since. I have often thought of it."

"Never think of it again, then," exclaimed the old man; "not that a sailor ought to fear death when it is the will of Providence to call for him, for it's my belief the road to heaven from the bottom of the sea is quite as near as from the churchyard, and may be a shorter tack. I ride you were awful out of the direction of our inbreak skipper."

"I wish so, too."

"Jack scraped him," continued Dance, musing-ly, "and why shouldn't you?"

Jack had a friend."

"Providence may raise you up one. Take an old sailor's advice—never return home till you are one-and-twenty, and then call lawyers call being of age, and then you may overhaul the accounts of that shark of a father-in-law if there is safety."

The eyes of Caleb sparkled at the thought.

"I must think," added the speaker. "I have received many a bright idea in my time; but then it is rather more knotted than usual. However, rest, never disrupt it."

"I will not."

"And no more thoughts about jumping overboard. Do you hear?"

Caleb promised that he would not.

"It would only be just what your enemy wishes," added his adviser; "and, above all, don't try it in the Hooghly. The crocodiles are very large jaws, and are a deuced sight worse than the skipper."

Their conversation was broken up by the appearance of Captain Gall upon the deck of the Caroline. He was dressed ready to go on shore. Calling to his mate, he directed him to get the boat ready.

It was lowered with alacrity, for not a man on board but felt delighted at the thought of his absence from the vessel, although it should be only for a few hours.

"Frazer," said the commander, as he stepped into it, "you will not allow any one to quit the ship."

The boat touched his cap.

"Or to come on board."

"No! Mr. Chatsbee, sir?"

"Of course, you may admit him," replied the captain. "Seeing that he is part owner, I don't very well see how to prevent it."

"Nor any of the shipchalks with vegetables and fruit?"

"I said European," said his superior, angrily, for he felt sure that Jack Sanders could never have escaped and remained concealed so long in Calcutta, but he not confessed to interest none one of his countrymen in his favor.

The speaker had not quitted his ship more than half an hour before a boat, rowed by several natives, came alongside. It was filled with the choicest fruits, which a boy about sixteen years of age expressed himself anxious to barter.

"You are sock-holdin'?" he shouted, holding up a basket of magnificent mangoes.

The mate shook his head.

"Me sell cheap."

"Got no money."

"But you got rum, old clothes, anything. We have pretty things—shells, bows for ladies, and dis for adult."

The lad held up several of these carved articles, such as card and cigar-cases, workboxes, inlaid with ivory, for which the native workmen are celebrated. The mate's foot, thinking he might procure a bargain, could not resist the temptation, but made signs to him to come on board.

In a second, the boy, who was no other than the spoken or groom of our hero, was upon deck, his goods exposed on before him. As he sold every-body cheap, the sailors bought freely. The mate was the last purchaser, an elegant basket, the price of which was five rupees.

The sale of the articles had paid too for it at the bazaar that very morning, and only an hour previous.

"Four," said the first.

"No, no; must have five."

"Four is enough," exclaimed the mate, holding out the money, thinking the sight of it might tempt him.

"And you give me soda-water bottles?"

"I told you we had none."

"Old clothes, then?"

The mate intimated that he had an old jacket and trowsers in his cabin. The present appeared to be an unlooked-for opportunity of doing a little business. Telling the boy not to part with the article till its return, he left the deck to fetch them.

"You no buy something?" said the groom, addressing Caleb, who was seated leaning disconsolately against the mast, regarding the scene.

"I have no money," replied the lad, sorrowfully.

"I trust you."

"I have no friend to give them to," added Caleb, with a sigh, "even if I were to purchase them."

"No friend?"

"Not one."

"I've forgot Jack," whispered the lad, in excellent English.

Caleb started. The name brought the warm blood into his cheek, and caused his heart to beat with a violence that he could scarcely control. A hope. It seemed as if Providence at last had heard his prayer.

Caleb took the hint and darted with it down the deck with the old mate made his appearance upon the deck with the articles he had been to fetch. As a matter of course, he did not haggle long over his bargain, but accepted the four rupees and the jacket and trowsers for his basket.

"I should like to have the fellow to it," observed the Scot, examining it admiringly. "Have you got any more?"

The boy added in the affirmative.

"Will you bring 'em?"

"For five rupees."

"Well," said the purchaser, "we won't quarrel about trifles; come on board to-morrow, and see if I've not what I can do with you."

The agent of our hero received to his boat, and might soon have been seen rowing rapidly away.

Watching the forecastle, Caleb crawled forward, and was not observed in his expectations; for he found in it a note, not written by Jack, but purporting to come from him.

The gentleman who assisted me to escape from the Caroline has been my best friend ever since he met by the captain, and is anxious to rescue you. The groom whom you saw on board my ship is the bearer of your reply; have one ready against his next visit to the ship, and commit Dance as to the means."

Caleb scanned the eyes of the lad more than once as he perused it. There was something so unusual in the whole affair that he hesitated to believe what touched his heart.

His first step was to communicate its contents to the sea-lawyer.

"Jack's alive," said the sailor. "I knew that young fellow," alluding to our hero, "was a trump. Bless him, he deserves to be an admiral. We'll soon have him out of doors, and then I'll tell you how to bring yourself overboard, ain't it? Never doubt Providence, boy, it's always right, and has an especial care for sailors. The difficulty will be to get your chum off the ship."

"I can swim," exclaimed the boy, eagerly.

"You forget the crocodiles," answered Dance, drily. "Better not try a race with them. I remember once upon boat to have seen a couple of 'em following a lame sailor, and I think they call it. It was curious to see how they doubled round and round their victim, as if they knew that at last; but, Lord bless you! their coming was nothing compared with the crocodiles."

Caleb shuddered at the thoughts the words of the speaker suggested.

"That plan must be given up."

"I have it!" exclaimed the old man, suddenly. "The cargo is not all landed yet. In the morning there will be several barrels of dry goods to land."

"Well?"

"I will head you up in one of them, and, once safely on shore, you can get out and run off and look after number of accidents for the rest."

"But where am I to go when on shore?"

"Providence will direct you."

"But my mother!"

His adviser still made the same reply.

Caleb did not like the risk. The project might succeed, but it might also fail, and then, not only it, once headed in the cask, it would be impossible for him to make himself visible to any one.

Dance admitted the validity of the objection. "I have it!" he exclaimed. "What a couple of fools we are to be making about the matter when we have three ready for use on the occasion."

"Three!" repeated the astonished boy.

The old sailor pointed to the ship's boats.

"The skipper," he said, "gives a spread to some of his countrymen to-morrow, and not one of the boats will be hauled on deck, the second mate will be asleep, and Frazer left in charge of the ship."

"I see."

"He will at quiet except the fourteen in the cabin, slip down the side, and cut the rope."

"But the men will not be in here."

"The tide will drift you," replied the seaman, in answer to the objection. "When did the Hindoo boy say he should be on board again?"

"The next day in the morning."

"Write an answer."

"Should it be found upon me?" urged Caleb.

"I'll take charge of it, and give it to him."

"Should it be found on you?"

"Why, they can't hang me for three words, though I once heard one of the lamb-lubbers say that a line of a man's handwriting might be twisted into a rope for his neck. Besides, they could never prove it to be my writing, seeing as I never learn."

"But what am I to write?"

"Tomorrow night, three"—that will be sufficient," said Dance. "A stranger who befriended Jack will understand it; take my word for it, he will be upon the watch, and keep a sharp look-out."

The scheme was arranged accordingly; the words, good-natured reader, which I take my word for it, an old card, and carefully folded away in the pocket of Dance till the opportunity should arrive for using it.

In the course of the day Captain Gall returned on board the Caroline, accompanied by a party of the Calcutta police, with the authorities had sent upon his representation of the mutinous spirit of his crew. One of the men was stationed at the gangway with strict orders to allow no one to descend or come on deck without the permission of the captain or the first mate.

The next morning the crew again made his appearance on deck. Fraser, whose waiting for him, called out that he should find the boat ready to be hauled on board when he returned.

"You send me de many first."

The first shook his head. He had not intended to quit the ship for a long time, but in old clothes.

Dance must see me," exclaimed the pedestrian said and continued to Dr. Jan out very loud—very."

"But you can't be mad here," thought the officer, "in letting him step aboard. The skipper is still sleeping in the cabin."

Having come to this conclusion, he made room for the passenger. Richard married the side of the vessel. He had the basket in his hand, and coolly gave me the driver to grasp the rope.

Dance flew down into the boat, and as the latter he stepped upon deck slid the card in his hand. He correctly it to his girdle, and walked off.

The old sailor vociferated.

Having accomplished the object of his visit, the dreaded mate did not linger longer than was necessary in order to avoid suspicion, and, having bargain; but, taking the clothes at a rupee less than the sum agreed upon, he left the vessel, but, he descended, he made some excuse to his boat to go on board the ship for a few days.

One person only had recognized him—the officer of the gangway, of which he was left in charge. He or grocer, of the young Englishman who drove so frequently upon ass—in all their capacities. With the cunning of an Asiatic he kept his knowledge of the fact to himself, thinking it would be time enough to use it if anything occurred, and a reward should be offered.

Let our true oriental love does anything without a recompense.

The letter, which consisted of Sanford and several of Mr. Chatsbee's clerks, came on board at sunset with the cook, and the captain, and Caleb, and Jack.

Their boat, at the conclusion of the evening, saw them to his boat.

"Police on deck!" observed the head clerk, as he was about to descend the gangway; "with the captain, captain?"

"A mutinous spirit on board," replied the latter, "but I know how to lay it. They haven't got a friend on board."

"Lay it in the Hot Sea," hiccoughed one of his party, "that is the place."

The witticism was rewarded with a laugh.

"Good night, my friends," said Hooghly, as he saluted the speaker. "I would like to see the spirit that would dare to mutiny on board of mine."

"That would be the last," exclaimed Caleb.

But no Caleb answered him, and the rage and disappointment of Mr. Hooghly was great when he imagined than described, when he discovered that the boy had escaped. All my help to baffle his precautions and escape from the Caroline.

As a matter of course, not one of the crew had the slightest idea of the part he had played.

forever by going to that man. Come home with me. I have no daughters, but if you like, you shall be as a child to me. Send to your husband for nothing. Go with me, as you are, to the station, and half an hour's ride will take us to the city, which is my present home. You will be safe at least with me; and I can perhaps bring about an understanding between you, after the pain of this has gone away."

"I will go with you," I said, clinging to her like a child. "But oh, take me where I never shall look upon his face again."

"For a time, at least," she answered. And that night I slept in her house, in one of the shadiest and most quiet streets of Boston.

Two months passed by, and in all that time, my husband and I had never met nor exchanged a letter.

I was looking idly from the carriage window one day, as it passed slowly along the crowded promenade of Washington street, when a beautiful engraving in a shop window attracted my attention. I pulled the check string, got out, and entered the shop. I had selected that and two other pictures, and was returning to the carriage, when the passage of four police officers, leading three drunken prisoners to the station house, forced me back to the door. I was meditating on the best means of escape through the rabble that followed, when a gentleman, standing near me, touched his hat, and said:

"If you will allow me, I will see you safely to your carriage, madam." My vail was down, and I could not see his face. But when, through his courtesy, I was safely sitting in the carriage, I raised it, and bent forward to thank him. Our eyes met—it was my husband!

By his start of surprise I saw that he had not known me before. He looked so changed—so pale—and his hair, which had been gray before, was now as white as snow. He leaned upon the carriage window, trembling like a leaf, and said in a low voice:

"My little Nina!"

The pet-name and the pleading tone would have been too much for me, if I had not thought of the blow he had given me. That steeled me.

"Will you be kind enough to accept my thanks for your services, Mr. James," I said, coldly, "and tell the coachman to drive on?"

"You have not forgiven me, then? you will take no pity on me—you will not think of my blighted and lonely life?"

I made a movement of impatience.

"Well, I will not detain you. But for your own sake, dear child, forgive me before you die!"

He bowed, and the carriage drove towards home. I was in a passion of tears when I reached the house, and ran up th stairs at once to "my mother's" room. She looked shocked and surprised when I came and flung myself down at her feet.

"My dear Nina, what is the matter?"

"Oh, take me somewhere where I can never see him again. I have just met him, and my heart is breaking."

She looked serious, and thought a moment.

"Do you ever wish to go back to him?"

"Oh, no."

"And you do not care how great a distance lies between you?"

"The greater the better, mother."

"Then we will go to Europe."

I looked up delightedly.

"Are you in earnest, mother?"

"Certainly. And I should have proposed the journey to you some time ago, only that I had an idea—as I must confess I have now—that you would return to him."

"Dismiss it, mother. I never shall."

The ship was a noble one, and sailed over the deep waters like a bird. She had not a bird's unerring instinct of flight, however, and but obeyed the human hand that guided her. So it happened that we went ashore in the English Channel one dark, tempestuous night, and out of all that gay company only three, besides myself, were saved—my mother, the captain's wife, and a common sailor, who, at the risk of his own life, swam with us through the rough waters to the main land. It was a noble deed! May he rest well where he is sleeping now in the old Kentish churchyard.

The tidings of that loss went home, like this: "and all on board perished." It was long before we knew it, and when at last I discovered it, I persuaded my mother that, as the captain's wife and our brave preserver were both dead, it was not necessary to divulge the truth. I, in good truth, *was dead* to all who had known me in my native land. And she consented, at last, that it should be as I wished.

Our new home was in the quiet German city of Bremen. We spent four years there, hearing but little of our friends beyond the sea. At last, in looking over an American paper, I came upon my husband's marriage! He had thought me dead, and had given my name and place to another. What was to be done? The lapse of time had softened me a little, and I began to think of him more kindly. But now that my silence had caused him to commit this terrible blunder, would it not be better to make myself an exile forever, rather than bring shame and sorrow to one who was conscious of no crime in loving me? I consulted with my mother, and it was her decision that we should stay.

Not long, however, could I say "we." Before the linden trees had shed their leaves that summer, she was lying in her grave, and I was left alone, and feeling like an orphan, although I was not really one, among those odd, kind people.

But those little children—those fair young maidens—those kind mothers, and those pleasant homes, did what nothing else had been able to do—and made me long for mine. The rustic cottage by the sea rose up before me, while I sat in the tea gardens and watched the crowds around me; and I felt a strange curiosity to see how the new wife looked in my old abode. For a year I drove away the thought of return, for I dreaded the ocean voyage, and I knew no welcome awaited me, when it was finished. But there is a foolish chord in every heart that throbs and tingles at the thought of home, and in the second summer after my mother's death I was upon the sea once more.

It was the sweetest of all times—the Indian summer—when, after a long and aimless journey through the western and southern States, I turned my course towards New England. I had been loitering here and there—dreading the time when I must go back to the old place, and yet longing for it, till the day fixed for my return was near at hand, and I had no more excuse for delay. I stopped in New York, and with the aid of a skillful hair-dresser and costumer, transformed myself into a woman apparently sixty years old. It was my intention to assume the name and character of my dead friend, if any suspicions were awakened in my husband's mind. I knew she, were she living, would pardon the act; and as he had never met her, my plan of operation was most simple. Just to look upon his face for the last time—to say that Nina sent him her forgiveness with her dying breath—that was all!

It was dusk when I arrived in the city of ——. My servant, who had already engaged rooms at one of the large hotels, met me at the depot, and dispatched my trunk by one of the porters, while he conducted me to a close hackney-coach which was in waiting. He was a faithful fellow, and I had confided to some extent in him, so that my altered appearance did not impress him so forcibly as to draw the attention of the bystanders to me. But he looked puzzled enough, as he mounted the box and drove away, to have made me laugh, if my heart had not been so full.

It was not many moments before the carriage stopped before the well-known gate, and, trembling in every limb, I opened it, and walked down the avenue. A neatly-dressed servant admitted me into the little parlor, and went to call her mistress. The room was greatly changed—filled with a profusion of showy knick-knacks, that looked strangely out of place.

The servant came back.

"Would you be kind enough to step in the boudoir?"

I followed her through the study, which was quite unaltered, into a small room which had been built out from the balcony, and furnished gaudily, like a bazaar. A stout, middle-aged lady, with black eyes and hair, and a face somewhat flushed, was sitting in an easy chair beside the table, busy with some useless piece of fancy work. She half rose from her seat as I came in, and then sank back, saying, in a drawling voice—

"Pray be seated, madam. You will excuse me, but I am an invalid, and not able to receive you, except here."

She looked little like one. And I looked at her earnestly, entirely at a loss to imagine what had been the tie that bound her to my husband.

"I beg your pardon for intruding upon you," I said, nervously. "I wished to see Mr. James."

"Oh!"

There was so much significance in the monosyllable that I hastened to explain.

"It is rather an awkward business—yet I should wish you to know it. His second wife——"

She nestled uneasily in her chair.

"Dear me! what about her? He is silly enough about her now. I hope you are not going to say anything to make him more so."

"How do you mean?"

"I don't mind telling you," she said, with a coarse frankness that repelled, though she meant it should win, me, "that my match with Mr. James was a made-up one, if you know what that means. My half brother, Richard Stanton——"

"Is he your brother?" I exclaimed, quite thrown off my guard.

"Yes—do you know him?" she asked, with a keen glance.

"I have heard Nina speak of him."

"Yes—there was some trouble with him and Mr. James about both wives, I believe. The first one was engaged to Richard, when he was a college student, and afterwards married Mr. James."

A new light broke in upon my mind. Here was a motive for any revenge he might have chosen to take, and with him a motive would have been equivalent to, or synonymous with, a deed.

"I never rightly knew about the second," she went on. "But after my brother and Mr. James became good friends, Richard was very anxious I should marry him, and I did. But I found this 'Nina,' as you call her, forever in my way. There was a picture, or a book, or a statue which had been hers, and which must, on no account, be touched or looked at. As for her boat," she added, with a jolly laugh, "I am sure, I was the last person to suggest any alterations in that, and Alfred and his father have it sealed up somewhere from the light and air, I believe. Very ridiculous at my husband's time of life, I can assure you, my dear madam. When he insisted upon the baby's being called Nina, we came very near quarreling. However, I let him have his way, and he has been more quiet ever since."

A door opened and shut behind me, and she looked up.

"Ah, there is Mr. James."

I turned and saw him in the study, looking towards me. He was an old man now, in look and motion as well as years, and I knew only too well what grief had worked the sad change. But in his arms sat a little fair-haired child, whose face was a faithful copy of his own, as I had first known him; the same regular features, the same sweet smile, and melancholy eyes. I gasped for breath, and the hot tears sprang to my eyes. For the sake of that pretty infant I could not disclose my secret—I could not bring shame upon that bright head; and yet, never in my whole life had I loved him so tenderly—never had I so longed to throw myself at his feet, and acknowledge all. I thought my heart would break and I should die, as I closed the door of the boudoir behind me and went up to him.

"You wished to see me," he said, in a hesitating kind of way, and looked at me so earnestly that I feared my gray hair, and altered face, and widow's weeds were but a poor disguise.

"Yes."

"Will you take a seat?"

"No, I prefer standing. I have only a few words to say to you, but they are from one you ever loved better than life."

The color forsook his lip and cheek.

"From Nina?"

"Yes."

He sat down and buried his face a moment in the soft curls of the child's hair. When he lifted it, it was wet with tears.

"Well—tell me."

"You know she is dead?"

"I know it, and yet I can hardly realize that the bright, happy creature has gone. To me, she can never be dead."

"Yet you will never meet her again, till, if God wills it, you meet in heaven," I said, with a trembling voice. "And I come to bring you her last words."

"Who *are* you?" he asked, turning towards me, and fixing his eyes full upon me.

"One whom Nina loved. Let that content you. She forgave you from the bottom of her heart. She charged me, if I lived, to seek you out and tell you so, and to receive that forgiveness, on my knees, for her, which she could not obtain herself. You will not refuse it?"

I knelt before him, and, trembling and weeping like a child, he laid his hand on mine.

"Woman, there was nothing to forgive. The letters were forged."

My heart leaped even then.

"But for her sake," I pleaded.

"For her sake, then, I say, Nina, I forgive you! And you must speak those words for her, or I shall not be at rest."

"My husband, I forgive you," I murmured, with such tears that I thought he must know me. But God was merciful!

I rose from my knees when I grew calm.

I went out through the familiar rooms with him once more, and he never dreamed that the living Nina was walking by his side. We parted at the door, but when I looked back as I shut the gate, he was standing on the steps of the portico, gazing earnestly after me, and holding up the child, whose little arms were stretched out, as if she would call me back. I sprang into the carriage, and waved him a last farewell, as it rolled away.

He dwells there yet with his wife and child, waiting for the hour that will set him free; and I, in a foreign land, am alone, waiting too!

FAITH.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Faith, thou art a rock on which we build
Our future Home;
What though tempestuous storms against thee beat,
With fury wild—yet may our weary feet
A refuge find in thee,
The portals of a bright Eternity
Are thine alone.

From thy fair summit, crowned with peace, we see
Light shining on our way,
And far beyond Life's troubled, restless tide,
We mark a sure, safe path through which to guide
Our weak and trembling bark;
What though our night is dark!
We know 'twill soon be day.

Steadfast we'll cling to thee—foundation sure;
Though palaces are raised upon the sand,
They are but earthly—can they stand the blast
Of the rude gale when madly rushing past?
Ah, no!—Sure shelter 's only found in thee;
We know beyond the turmoil of the sea,
Is the fair promised land.

UNCLE FRANK'S DESK;

OR,

THE SECRETED WILL.

BY CORA BELL.

"Alice, my beloved, do not leave me to die alone. Alice! Alice! come to me," was uttered in the most plaintive accents of human misery.

It was a small garret room in one of the most crowded and neglected alleys of Manchester. Poverty—that dire poverty that bows down the loftiest spirit, and leaves the soul crushed and paralyzed by its depressing influence—was there. The grate fireless, though in the depth of an inclement winter; the black, decayed boards, the cold, damp walls, from which the moisture hung in heavy drops; not even the few sordid articles of furniture visible, which are usually seen in the dwellings of the very poor, for everything had been parted with to sustain the afflicted occupants of that miserable chamber.

Such was the home of a Manchester operative—a man yet in the early summer of life, but who had toiled from childhood upwards for a subsistence, and who now, stricken with typhus fever, contracted in his overcrowded, ill-ventilated abode, had nothing but the miserable parish dole to sustain him.

Stretched on the pallet from which the corpses of his two children had been taken the previous week, for weary days and nights the strong man had vented the anguish of a broken heart in the wild ravings of delirium, yet still he lived on. His wife—his tender, loving wife—was even denied the solace of sitting by him to wet his parched lips, or support his fainting head on her fond bosom. Through the weary hours of the day he was left to solitude and neglect, for the poor woman worked at the factory, and without the pittance her daily exertions procured, they would be unable to sustain their miserable existence.

It was not yet evening, though all was darkness in the room; for light, blessed light, that God sends down untaxed to the poor, was doled out to these wretched dwellings in modicums that barely enabled one to discern objects in the noonday. A sickly gleam of white, though, came from the narrow dormer window formed by the piled-up snow upon the opposite roofs, which drifted into fantastic shapes, looked like ghosts peering into that abode of sorrow.

The house was crowded, and the thin walls echoed with the sounds of coarse, brutal voices, mingled with oaths and drunken imprecations, but audible over all was the ceaseless, monotonous beating of the sleet against the shattered casement, and the fitful blasts of wind, as it swept along the chimnies.

"Alice, Alice," that deep, hollow voice had uttered more and more feebly, and yet she came not; but the latch was at last raised, and "Dear Frank, I will be with you now," was softly said. A light was struck, and a faded, fragile form bent in trembling anxiety over the bed.

"Oh, Alice," said the man, attempting to raise himself from the pillow, "I thought you would never come. I am dying. Have you got anything to give me—one drop of wine, beer, tea, anything that would take this cold, terrible sinking from my heart."

The girl—for though thin and careworn, she was very young—looked at him a moment in silent, speechless anguish, then, wringing her hands, she said, wildly—"Nothing, nothing—I could get nothing. The factory clerk said I was late these two days, and he would not give me even a shilling, and Mr. Seris is gone out of town."

"God help us," gasped the man, faintly. "Oh, Alice, if I could only die soon, you might go back to service, away from this horrid place. When I called out for you, Alice, I thought I was going; alone in this dark room so long, something heavy seemed pressing down my brain, and twice I felt an icy hand grasp my heart."

The young wife wept in agony, while she murmured distractedly, "Oh, Frank, you are dying for want of nourishment. The doctor told me you would recover if you got that, now that the fever is gone. Oh, he knew well enough I could get nothing out of the parish allowance; since my poor babe's death, they have reduced even that."

"Our case is no new thing to him," said the man; "it is one of thousands. Look at all that were struck down with the fever when he came here last year. He told me that there was one dead in every room, and now——"

The wife shuddered and hid her face in her hands. She had paid her tax to the King of Terrors, but what if this sole beloved one was taken from her, too.

"Oh, I am selfish, Alice; see how wet you are, my poor girl, and you have no fire."

"Yes—there is a little wood left; I will kindle it now," and the patient creature shook the sleet off her faded shawl, and mechanically wrung the moisture from her auburn hair.

In a few moments a scanty wood fire sent forth a transitory glow. She had hardly done, when a faint tap was heard at the door. Alice opened it, and a tiny child's form could be descried in the dim light.

"Is that Patty?" said the woman.

"Yes—it's only me," murmured a faint, timid voice. "I have brought you a little milk for Mr. Trevor."

"God bless you," was the tearful response, as the child's slender form glided back into the darkness.

"Poor little Patty; did I say I was alone all day?" said the sick man. "That sweet child sat by me a long time, and gave me water when I was nigh fainting. She wanted to light the fire, but I knew it would go out again, and I was afraid to keep her, lest the old man would beat her."

"He is sick, and has not gone out with the organ these two days," said the wife. "Ah, he's a bad man to treat that dear child so savagely."

"Yes, Alice, I'm glad our children are gone. Cold, hunger and oppression is the only lot of the poor man's child. Oh, that I had left this country when I was strong," murmured the man, in bitter, desponding tones. "From the cradle to the grave, the worker is ground down to a bondage more unremitting than the beasts of burthen, and when old age or sickness falls on him, he must die or go to the parish."

Alice had warmed the milk, the compassionate gift of that oppressed child, and now held it to her husband's lips. But the poor fellow pushed it feebly aside, saying—

"Take some of it first, Alice, you are cold and wet."

"No, Frank, I'm strong. I never feel pain or suffering only for you." The poor wife watched him with anxious tenderness, as, between gasps of weakness that almost impeded his breath, he drank the liquid off. A sigh of anguish escaped her. She had no food for him, and could he endure the night without it? Oh, she had toiled during the long, weary hours, when her tortured spirit had longed to be with that beloved husband, and after all she could not procure him a morsel of food. She had even stooped to sue for charity, and had been refused.

We have said that the apartment was destitute of furniture, but the flickering candle now revealed a small desk of foreign wood, curiously carved in the Indian style, which lay on an old ricketty table beneath the window. To this desk the girl's eyes wandered continually, sometimes with an abstracted gaze, that had no speculation in it, at others with an eager, hasty glance, as if suddenly struck with some idea connected with it.

The sufferer had fallen into a kind of doze. He opened his eyes, and extending his wasted hand, said—

"Sit beside me, Alice. Come closer, for this icy, shuddering weakness seems to leave me when you are near."

The girl crept into the bed, and passed her hand caressingly over her husband's forehead, parting the damp, heavy hair which lay in disordered masses upon it. A sickly smile played over his pallid features, and he gazed with unutterable tenderness upon the pale, sad face before him.

"Dear Frank," said she at length, in a hesitating tone, "would you let me sell the old desk? The man that bought the chairs offered me a pound for it."

A shade of vexation momentarily swept across the sick man's face.

"Ah, Alice, did I not before say that I would rather die of hunger than part with my poor old uncle's gift. In all my poverty I have kept that."

"But, Frank, this is for my life," said the girl calmly. "I'm too faint and weak to work to-morrow without getting some food. Uncle would have been glad that anything he had was of use to you."

"Oh, my poor wife, you are weak and faint," cried the man, "and I'm so selfish, I only think of myself. Take it, take it, Alice, dear. Why should we keep it? Strangers will have it when we are gone."

She did not wait for him to recall the words, but with a wild eagerness that was painful to witness, left the room.

In a few minutes she returned, accompanied by a man with a coarse apron and a paper cap.

"How are you since, poor fellow?" said he, approaching the bed, and speaking in rough but kindly accents.

"Poorly, sir, poorly; always longing for a breath of the pure air."

"I reckon these ere old houses come a little too close to the window, to give it much chance to get at you," said the man. "Ah, it's hard not to give the poor light and fresh air. But keep good heart, friend; it won't be always so."

He counted the money into Alice's hand, and shouldered the desk, after which poor Frank sent a glance of ill-dissembled anguish.

With the rapidity that only loving hands can effect, the decayed embers of the fire were brightened up, and a bit of white bread and a glass of warm wine were held by the tender wife to the trembling lips of her husband, who partook of the unwonted refreshment with a devouring eagerness that plainly revealed he was indeed perishing for lack of sustenance.

"Oh, that is so good!" murmured the invalid, sinking back upon the pillow with a sigh of relief. "But, Alice," said he, in accents of tender reproach, "it was me, not yourself, you thought of. Oh! let me see you before my eyes, drink some of that wine; it's done me good already."

The girl smiled sadly. She poured a small quantity of the wine into a cup, and drank it off.

"Tell me, are you angry with me, Frank, about the desk?"

"No, my poor child; why should I be angry with you? It's you have reason to hate me, for I brought you out of comfort into all this misery; but God knows how hard I've worked, both late and early, to make a home for you. I'm glad uncle is not alive to see us in this strait, now."

"Wasn't he killed, Frank?" inquired the wife.

"Yes, Alice." He was silent—then spoke after a pause—

"Long years of misery and sorrow have passed since then; yet it seems but as yesterday since my dear uncle came into our place with that old desk. He was, as I told you, my mother's only brother; he had gone to sea when she was a little child, but he loved her dearly, and after years of travel in foreign climes, he came back to find all dead in the old home in his native village. He heard that my mother had married a weaver here in Manchester, and he came and found her out. My father (oh, God grant there be none like me, who can repeat the sacred name of father without one emotion of tenderness or respect to hallow its memory), was idle, savage, and intemperate, and treated my poor, patient mother like a brute. Before my uncle came, she worked all day long at the factory, so that household duties were neglected, which irritated him a good deal, though they were not neglected either; for I have often known mother to sit up, after a hard day's work, for several nights together, washing and mending our clothes, for I had four brothers and sisters, who, poor things, all fell victims to being forced to work too young. Oh! the innumerable sufferings of my childhood, at that time, crowd upon my mind, and almost overpower it."

"Do not tell me any more, Frank; you will lose the little strength you have gained."

"I've been silent all day, Alice; it will do me no harm," continued the young man. "I remember well how my young sisters used to cry when father roused them at the first round of the factory bell, and drove them out shivering of a dismal winter's morning, when it was as black as midnight. And after all, the united earnings of us young ones would sometimes only amount to a few shillings. But cold, hunger, and protracted labor gradually killed them all, and I was left alone.

"When my uncle came all was changed for the better. He paid well and regularly for his board, on condition that mother should go no more to work. This pleased my father well enough, for it increased his comforts, and self was all he cared for. I was called after uncle, and to him I owe the little I know. He taught me to read and cipher, brought me with him to church, and on Sabbath evenings I used to sit beside him at that old desk, copying from memory the text and such portions of the morning's sermon as I could remember, all of which Uncle Frank carefully sewed in a book and kept by him. Home was something like a home then. But my poor mother died—then my uncle offered father to take me away with him and provide for me; but he did not want to lose the old man, for he suspected he had money; so he raged and swore that I should never go with him. Uncle never spoke another word on the subject, but he looked paler and sadder than he used. Dear old man, he used to tell me unceasingly of the wonders of the New World, and of the noble homes that lay awaiting the hand of industry in the Far West. He made me promise to go to America when I was a man. Oh, how I've longed all my life to collect the means to do so. Uncle was fond of being on the quays; one day, a load of timber from a wagon fell on him, crushing him fearfully. He only spoke a few words before he died, and these were—

"'My old desk—Frank——'

"Father hastened to it, hoping that it contained a lot of treasure; but when he found only a few tracts and a small package of money neatly labeled, 'For my burial,' he raged and cursed, and would have broken it up but I implored him not.

"Latterly I had been at school, but the day after uncle's death I was sent apprentice to the weaving. Since then, dear Alice, you know my fate."

They slept after a day of sickness, toil, and misery—that wretched pair—wretched despite of the riches of mutual love and tenderness glowing in their hearts.

Alice had risen early, and was giving her husband a cup of tea, preparatory to leaving him for the day, when the door was abruptly opened, and the cabinet-maker who had bought the desk entered the room with a paper in his hand.

"Are you Frank Trevor, of Cornfield?" said he.

"Yes, sir," said the sick man, in somewhat agitated tones, while the poor wife started forward and gazed at the man with nervous terror, fearful that he had repented of his bargain, and was going to return the desk.

"Then I think if this is right," said the man, holding up what appeared a sealed parchment, "I've good news for you. I was putting a new back in that ere old desk when I spied a false panel—I slipped in my hand, and found this. It was hidden right cute."

"What is it?" said Frank, anxiously.

"A will leaving you five hundred pounds ($2,500.) It's dated ten years back; but if the money's right, that's nothing."

That moment the doctor entered the room.

"What's the matter?" said he, glancing at the excited faces of the party.

"This, sir," said Frank, handing him the paper. "Tell me what it means, though I think I can see all now. My dear uncle left me this. He denied himself the pleasure of a home to be with me to the last."

"It means, my man," said the doctor, gaily, "that you must get well as fast as you can now. You are heir to five hundred pounds, and which, by the date of this paper, must have accumulated to something more. The copy of this is lodged with respectable solicitors in London, who, I doubt not, have advertized for you. I will write for you to them to-day, so make yourself easy, my good fellow."

The offer of some money to supply needful comforts was gladly accepted by Alice, who now recognized a superintending providence in the physician's previous indifference.

The following week a letter arrived from the solicitors, saying that they had drawn up such a will at the time mentioned, and had since made every inquiry both for it and the heir, but could not succeed in their search. They would send a business man to investigate.

All proved satisfactory, and the money was paid. Joy cures rapidly. Frank Trevor rose from his bed with a heart throbbing with gratitude and delight. The beloved desk was recovered unmutilated; and Patty, the little organ girl, whose savage father had died, was taken to the arms of the grateful pair. In a few weeks the little party bade an eternal adieu to the stifling air of Manchester, and embarked for America. In the fertile and beautiful West, the gift of patient, self-denying Uncle Frank enabled them to purchase land and a pleasant home. Here they reared a happy family, the youngest member of which was taught to look with love and reverence upon Uncle Frank's Desk.

A MYSTERY UNVAILED.

"After looking through green spectacles for some time, white paper appears red; and after looking through red spectacles white paper appears green." There are only three original colours in nature—blue, red, and yellow. All the rest are compounds; white is a mixture of all. Now, in looking long at the red, the eye becomes tired; so that when the white, which contains all the three, is presented to it, it abstracts or overlooks the red; and the blue and yellow alone being left, the paper appears green; for blue and yellow make green. So after looking through green, it abstracts the blue and yellow (or green) from the paper, and red is left. On the same principle, if you look through yellow spectacles, the white will afterwards appear purple; for blue and red, the complement of the yellow, make purple. After looking through blue spectacles, the white appears orange, or red and yellow, and so on. This is a law of nature, which leads to a knowledge of harmony in colors; blue makes the finest contrast to orange, and red to green.

I WILL.

We like that strong, robust expression. No one having uttered it in sincerity, was ever a mean cringing man. The pigmies of the world did not trouble him, though they rose in masses to pull him down. He speaks and the indomitable will prevails. His enemies fall before him. He rides forth a conqueror. Would you then be great? Would you be distinguished for your scientific or literary attainments?—"I will" breathing from your lips, and bursting from a great heart, you cannot but prevail. Show me the man who never rose higher than a toad-stool, and whose influence died with his breath, and we will point you to a groping, cringing wretch, who trembled at the approach of a spider and fainted beneath a thunder-cloud. Let the fires of energy play through your veins, and if your thoughts are directed in right channels, you will startle the slumbering universe.

THE BREEZE OF MAY.

BY WILLIAM ROSE WALLACE.

Breeze of the blossoming May!
Then com'st with flowers
And gentle winds upon our waiting world,
Like a rich spirit looking long and long
For something it would love.

Breeze of the May!
Is there not something here to love?
Stoop o'er the meadow lowland of the sea
And kiss the dimples from the waves that lie
Like the fair face of him who sang for us
In sunny scenes as serious wrote that sweet
Yet sad song of old, the pilot-ghost wanting
Touch the young mother as she gently lies
In her pale cradle-couch—breathe to her hoping ears
Of love, and all the wondrous things that were
Breathed in her first dream.

Oh, that gentle love!
There are some others that I know, that I have felt
They let me, even to-day—to find great God
Who gave me them for my soul-embracing sweet,
So the dim ray of hope—as I regret's wane
Amid the faded flowers of a wrecked Paradise,
Will find clear sun in the May's sunless here.

Ah, Breeze! why did I dare to speak to thee?

AUNT SARAH'S STRATAGEM.

BY STANDISH CUSH, JR.

Mrs. Olive Burchard was a widow, a little past the prime of life, but still blooming and sound-minded. She had but child—a son—whose name was Nathan, and who had reached the age of five-and-twenty, without having fairly bargained away his heart. He may have for that part of himself several times, but he had always managed to gain it again on very serious damages laid and claimed. He was a fine, intelligent-looking young man, with an active mind, and nervous temperament, and either prone to have his own way. People said he was solid—as solid people always pronounced him—and "a queer fellow," others. A queer man might have been called stubborn and willful, but Nathan Burchard was wealthy, and people were generous.

Nathan laid down his paper and went out, leaving his mother alone. In a little while the outer door was opened, and Mrs. Burchard was soon made glad by the appearance of her sister Sarah. Sarah was her only sister, and, though a few years the eldest, still unmarried. But Sarah Lovell was not an old maid from necessity. She was also not beautiful, as such women can love but once, died ere the capital triad was filled, and she had never been slain.

The two sisters were soon engaged in a pleasant conversation, and when they had related all the items of news that seemed to be of importance, Aunt Sarah remarked:

"I have been to see Mrs. Montgomery this forenoon."

"Is Ellen at home?" asked Mrs. Burchard.

"Yes; and it is of her that I wish particularly to speak," resumed the other. "I see her, and I am enough to convince me that she is not so happy as she ought to be. She is a sweet, natural, generous, virtuous girl; and a prettier does not live in this town."

"You speak truly," said the widow, in a tone which bore a slight tinge of sadness.

"And a warm friend and more devoted companion cannot be found," continued Aunt Sarah.

"I believe you," was the reply.

"Then why her Nathan does not see it?"

The widow shook her head, and said she didn't know.

"But he has left her, hasn't he?"

"I fear he has."

"Yes, *he* *has*. Then you had no hand in wrecking off the intimacy?"

"I? Ah—indeed I did not, Sarah. I would rather own Miss Montgomery for my daughter-in-law than any other girl I know. I think I can truly say, that nothing else could make me so happy at this moment as to have Nathan come and ask me if he could take her hand."

"Then why has he left her?" queried Sarah. "I am sure no one loves both her and I less that she loved him, and loves him now. Is it possible that he has allowed his thoughts to turn upon Sylvia Paine?"

"I will tell you how I think the matter stands," returned Mrs. Burchard. "I know that Nathan allowed himself to be too much carried by the fashionable friends with whom he associates, and his own convictions of right have given way before their sophistry and blandishments. And then another thing may have helped operate to this end; you know he had a particular aversion to anything governed by the time or place of others. It is a quality of mind that he inherits from his father, and it governs his more than he is for good. He knows that people have looked upon his marriage with Ellen as a fixed fact, and I think he meant to disappoint them."

"Do you think he loves Sylvia Paine?" asked Aunt Sarah.

"He cannot love her as a wife should be loved," replied the widow, very confidently; "for she has none of those qualities of mind which are in the true direction of such a soul as I feel assured my son possesses. She is brilliant, and witty; and belongs to a wealthy family; and Nathan is a selfish circle; but I am very certain that she has no such heart as a wife should have."

"And what does Nathan say about it?"

"He has said nothing directly to me. Others have told me, however, of his sayings, so that I know very nearly what his opinions are. He says he looks upon his intimacy with Ellen Montgomery as a sort of schoolmate friendship, and he will always carry for her reverence and love born plainly that he should do so. He feels as though the match would not be of his own choosing, as he will not have it."

"Then I think he really loves Ellen?"

"I am sure he does; but has allowed this foolish whim to turn him from her."

"And do you imagine that he seriously thinks of offering his hand and heart to Sylvia Paine?"

"I fear, every day, that he will make an announcement to me to that effect. I know that he has spoken of it to others."

"But haven't you said anything to him on the subject?"

"No. I know not what to say. I know his disposition so well that I fear any advice from me would make matters worse. A better son never lived, but on this one point he is beyond my control."

"I must ask one question more. Do you think he has any objection to Ellen on account of her poverty?"

"Not in the least. He is above that, so far as his own feelings are concerned."

"Well," resumed Aunt Sarah, after pondering a few moments, "my opinion in this matter is considered; and now if you will help me, I think we may turn Nathan back upon the right track. I am satisfied of two things: First, Ellen Montgomery loves him devotedly; and has been led to that love by his own attentions to her. And second, he loves her, and would be happier in a home of which she was mistress than in any other."

"I think you are right," said the widow.

"Then we must turn him back."

"But how?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. All he needs is to be made to think he is right. Just put him into that frame of mind where his love for self-gratification will lead him aright, and I think the work is done. Now mind you—what I say at this time I mean for Nathan's own ear, and you must not only tell him what I say, but you must also appear to join with me. I am glad to learn that your son has considered well to make Ellen Montgomery his wife. One of my particular friends will soon offer his hand; and she will get a good husband and be happy. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," replied the widow.

After this Aunt Sarah went on and enlarged upon the theme, until her sister was thoroughly posted up.

At supper time Nathan came in, and Aunt Sarah took her kind leader.

"Mother," said the young man, as they sat by the roaster-table, "what do you think of Aunt Sarah look so who handsome this evening? She eyed me so though she saw something wonderful about me."

"She had been entertaining about you, my son," the widow replied, very quietly.

"I don't suppose she told much good of me," returned Nathan.

"She spoke very well, my dear boy."

"O, yes. All these old maiden aunts do that."

"But your aunt Sarah has a good heart and good sound sense, you must remember."

"So she has, mother. I will not deny that. But what has she been saying to you?"

"Perhaps I ought not to tell you."

"O—did I say that I would know how much I am indebted to her?"

"Well, then," Mrs. Burchard, carefully, "she commenced by speaking of Ellen Montgomery."

"That is an old story," returned Nathan, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Perhaps it may be, but still I think she takes the right view of it."

"Ah? And what may *he* view be?"

"She says that Ellen loves you," she replied, my son, she does——"

"Don't be under any apprehension on that account," interrupted the youth. "I am well aware how unreasonably it is for one poor old maid to have sworn home to pick, and I assure you I shall take no offense."

"Well, Nathan, she had heard that you had engaged yourself to Miss Paine, and she was very sorry, and she was anxious to know if there was any truth in it. I told her there was not."

"Why, mother, you are a diplomatist!"

"Of course I did; and she was very much pleased with the answer."

"Ah—pleased, was she?"

"Yes. She thought it a fitter reasons for being well minded. In the first place, she said Ellen ought to have a husband who would be more domestic in his habits; and then, my son, she thought you ought to have a wife who would respect more strictly the proprieties of life, and not display, and exhibit your wealth to more advantage, and third—she could not appreciate the interests of a very dear young friend of hers, who would shun all the evil and the hollowness, and for whom she would make a true and loving wife."

"Quite a calculator, my aunt Sarah is," said Nathan, with a smile of pleasure, and then another interval.

"But you must remember that she is calculating for the happiness of others, my son."

"O—certainly. Ellen is a very *dear* friend of hers!"

"She didn't say. She merely remarked that he was an honorable, upright young man, who had loved Ellen for a long time, and who would soon offer her his hand."

"And I suppose Ellen loves him in return?"

"Certainly."

"And I shouldn't be *donnée* enough."

"I know what your aunt meant, Nathan. She knows that you want something more brilliant than Ellen would be. She said Ellen would answer every purpose for one who could only afford to take a wife for the sake of the comforts of his own home, but you would be ashamed of her in society. Ellen's homely songs would be ridiculed in the circles, and her plain, domestic habits would be quickly eclipsed, and herself put to shame, by a few brilliant ladies from each wife as move in the more favored circles. I am sure your aunt meant well, my son."

"You may just inform my aunt from me," said the young man, with some spice to his tone, "that Miss Montgomery's estimation of my character as to Miss Montgomery's talk is much more sensible than is the talk of some others of the fair sex."

"But, my dear boy, you must not be offended. Your aunt meant nothing but what was for wishing the greatest amount of good for her friends. She knows your talents, and she knows Ellen Montgomery's tastes, and she thinks her plan is best for all concerned, and is much pleased to find that you had already concerned, and is much pleased to find that you had already concerned for her."

"I am not so easily offended as to notice the whims of old maids."

"Remember, she is your mother's sister, Nathan."

"And as such I respect her," said the youth. He opened a newspaper, and having held it before his face for some minutes, he remarked, with an effort to appear careless—

"I suppose Miss Montgomery will soon be made happy."

"I'm sure I hope so," returned the widow. "And I think she will, for Aunt Sarah assures me that the young man not only loves her truly—loves her for the many good qualities she possesses—but that he is generous and true to a fault."

"I am glad she is likely to be so well provided for, I am sure." As Nathan thus spoke he raised the newspaper again, and all mother went on with her sewing.

When the youth first himself alone in his chamber, he began to ponder upon the subject of his late conversation. He spent half an hour in pacing to and fro across his room, and then he went to bed. On the following day he rode out into the country, and next when he came in he noticed a letter party to which he had a pressing invitation. Sylvia Paine was there, and Nathan with jewelry and dazzling with wit. She sought Nathan's side, and did her utmost to entertain him. But the young man was in a contemplative mood, and he began to meditate and criticise. Yes, Aunt Sarah was right—Ellen would be a far more domestic wife. One of my particular friends will soon offer her his hand; and she will get a good husband and be happy. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," replied the widow.

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"Well, Nathan, she had heard that you had engaged yourself to Miss Paine, and she was very sorry, and she was anxious to know if there was any truth in it. I told her there was not."

"Why, mother, you are a diplomatist!"

"Of course I did; and she was very much pleased with the answer."

"Ah—pleased, was she?"

"Yes. She thought it a fitter reasons for being well minded. In the first place, she said Ellen ought to have a husband who would be more domestic in his habits; and then, my son, she thought you ought to have a wife who would respect more strictly the proprieties of life, and not display, and exhibit your wealth to more advantage, and third—she could not appreciate the interests of a very dear young friend of hers, who would shun all the evil and the hollowness, and for whom she would make a true and loving wife."

"Quite a calculator, my aunt Sarah is," said Nathan, with a smile of pleasure, and then another interval.

"But you must remember that she is calculating for the happiness of others, my son."

"O—certainly. Ellen is a very *dear* friend of hers!"

"She didn't say. She merely remarked that he was an honorable, upright young man, who had loved Ellen for a long time, and who would soon offer her his hand."

"And I suppose Ellen loves him in return?"

"Certainly."

"And I shouldn't be *donnée* enough."

"I know what your aunt meant, Nathan. She knows that you want something more brilliant than Ellen would be. She said Ellen would answer every purpose for one who could only afford to take a wife for the sake of the comforts of his own home, but you would be ashamed of her in society. Ellen's homely songs would be ridiculed in the circles, and her plain, domestic habits would be quickly eclipsed, and herself put to shame, by a few brilliant ladies from each wife as move in the more favored circles. I am sure your aunt meant well, my son."

"You may just inform my aunt from me," said the young man, with some spice to his tone, "that Miss Montgomery's estimation of my character as to Miss Montgomery's talk is much more sensible than is the talk of some others of the fair sex."

"But, my dear boy, you must not be offended. Your aunt meant nothing but what was for wishing the greatest amount of good for her friends. She knows your talents, and she knows Ellen Montgomery's tastes, and she thinks her plan is best for all concerned, and is much pleased to find that you had already concerned for her."

"I am not so easily offended as to notice the whims of old maids."

"Remember, she is your mother's sister, Nathan."

"And as such I respect her," said the youth. He opened a newspaper, and having held it before his face for some minutes, he remarked, with an effort to appear careless—

"I suppose Miss Montgomery will soon be made happy."

"I'm sure I hope so," returned the widow. "And I think she will, for Aunt Sarah assures me that the young man not only loves her truly—loves her for the many good qualities she possesses—but that he is generous and true to a fault."

"I am glad she is likely to be so well provided for, I am sure." As Nathan thus spoke he raised the newspaper again, and all mother went on with her sewing.

"That would be telling," returned Aunt Sarah.

"Come," resumed Nathan, turning to his wife, "now that we are married I have a right to know who it was that made love to you."

Ellen seemed bewildered. She gazed first upon her husband, then upon Aunt Sarah.

"She don't know anything about it," the old lady cried. "The match was one of my own invention. It was a sangerine nephew of mine that I had selected as her husband."

"Your nephew?" said Nathan, in surprise.

"Yes, nephew. You see, I knew how much jealousy must be driven. Just make Ian believe you want 'em to go one way, and they'll be sure to go the other."

And as Aunt Sarah spoke she laughed outright.

"Oho—I begin to see through it," exclaimed the nephew. "You have been playing a joke on a purpose for me!"

"Yes, Nephew—I have, And when you dire of wearing it, come a-ter tell me, and I will ask your pardon for what I have done."

Nathan Burchard looked into Ellen's face and he could find no room in his heart for an unkind feeling. Sarah often visited him, but he never was tired of the golden joke, so the old lady never had occasion to ask his pardon.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. A. G. wrote to know—how young authors are to obtain fame. If they are not permitted to read volumes of autographs in the Lenox, as if voluntary contributions are not even so much as read in the Ledger, she does not say that "young and unknown authors have a right to be heard." Certainly they have a right to be heard, and if we are wide-awake hearers, and to them, as well as to the public. We are perfectly willing they should gain fame, but whenever, just as we are willing that the person (whether lady or gentleman) introduced to him must be known to fame.

HERO.—The best letter will open your doctor and take the case in hand. You should not have your wife's daughter to wear this dress; and if your wife "always will get such for her," you must tell her that you will not pay for it. Your wife is a child, and you must treat her as such, instead of having coins and coughs. A little inattention in such cases will prevent many evils which may otherwise follow that children's prematures graves.

ANNIE.—Every week of a moon sister in your brother, that he laughs at your rich uncle's penniless place. He is a man of the most accurate discernment, however, and laughs from a spirit of benevolence, knowing how excellent a husband he will make for some girl who is not dazzled by wealth. He wants you to shall never allow "your sister" to play is perhaps owing to your being deficient in the arts of pleasing.

CHARLIE W.—You can read law at home, during the first two years of your apprenticeship, or you can go to a law office. Read's Commentaries is the first work you should read. It is a work of great research, and will be of use to you. Of course you need frequent visits to the office, as you will see many legal documents and they become as familiar as the letters of your own name.

BOOTBLACKING.—You should have notice agent. When a boy is in the habit of coming to the door for the last two keeping company, the should set our other him, nor make him feel that he is in the way. Some one should have informed the fine has got rid of a dolor and false lover. Send to Ledger office, and you will receive the price of your contributions from the publisher.

CARRIE.—Wherever you find that your copy of the London Ledger is worn out, you may be sure that it is the property of whom you bought it, and he will give you a good story for it. Do not trouble him with your letters, for they will withdraw back from accession all copies imperfectly printed. Such letters are unanswered, and you will find the reason in your letter.

TOM.—If, as you say, your regard of adventure is perfectly honorable, you will not be afraid to let her see the world. The fact before certainly affect an ample field for your attentions, and you will find that you have a good deal to be interest. You would do better to turn your attention to some other quarter of the city for a boarding-house.

NEWSBOY.—Yes. Some European ladies take arsenic in very small quantities, and so increase the appearance and brilliancy of their complexion and eyes. It kills them at last; and the use of arsenic for cosmetic purposes is the subject of a law in a state, it is death to sing, as well as it is to confess the truth.

L. L.—Love never would be a happy thing for you unless you a lady who had appointed a meeting with you and been present at the time keeping it, or had previously broken the appointment. You might write to her, and make an explanation, if you do not wish to see her.

MARGARET.—When you reply do not write a person to call on you. Write again, you neglect or wish not to see us. Gentle dignity and frankness in such matters are less disagreeable than silence, which is the opposite of politeness, and is always frank and honest.

LOUISE.—You should gently decline to act your schoolmate in inspecting upon his teachers, by translating his exercises for him. If he is a true friend he will not like to take so much time as he pleases to become good scholars himself.

ANNIE.—Your brother is not to be considered proficient, in regard to the lady's age, merely. "If my age be nothing," he says, "I am twenty-one years old." Is he right in the square root of two-sixths of that product will be four, 7?

LOIS.—If the surgeon neglected you, or was too untruthful to be trusted, you should have called another surgeon. Are you of his negligence or laughing, you can not tax for not going to see you, and he can not sue for your bill.

EDA.—The young man was in the wrong. It is not customary for a lady to call on a gentleman, and that was of itself sufficient to show that the lady was not a well-bred person. You should cut his acquaintance.

ANNIE.—Your letter seems to be intended for Correspondents, by the manner in which you speak of "young ladies in the city." Your letter will be sent to the right person, and belongs with more respect.

ANNIE.—Your letter is a villain, or he would never make such a proposition to you. Let him go, by all means; and if he do go as villains usually do, you will be rid of a bad match cheaply enough. Do not write to him, or have anything to do with him.

ANNIE.—The publication of sexual acquaintances is pretty a matter of your heart and your conscience. Follow your own counsel.

C. B. B.—We do not make a business directory of the Ledger. Such an opinion is not correct. We have our own "path" of advertisements.

ANNIE.—You are too impending. Ask the girl of she will be your wife, and learn the worst, or the best, at once.

ANNIE.—Yes. You are not the first person who has had to pour with, and learn done with your doubts and fears.

J. C. W.—We do not publish the name of any subscriber. That is the law we will not go back of it.

H. H.—No. You are not entitled to a subscription to the Ledger, unless you pay for it in advance.

NORWICH.—You should ask the young lady's permission to introduce your friend to her.

J. C. L.—If the young lady will not give up your miniature you cannot get it.

*** Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*